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Regionalism, Nationalism & Modern Architecture

Proceedings

Edited by

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CEAA | Centro de Estudos Arnaldo Araújo
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Regionalism, Nationalism & Modern Architecture

In 1954, S. Giedion argued that even in the most international component of Modern architecture never lost the mark of its regional origin. He believed that "regional contributions may lead to an universal architectural concept" and give as examples Tony Garnier and Auguste Perret works that, from his point of view, are directly rooted in the French building tradition or Mondrian's "neutral forms" and abstract plan surfaces of Theo van Doesburg's and C. van Eesteren that can be explained by abstract forms of the colored horizontal plans of Dutch landscapes and the vertical plans of its traditional buildings' plain façades.

Similarly, M. Sabatino draws attention to the way in which the Italian architects in the 1930s resumed the courtyard house of both classical and vernacular tradition in clearly modern designs, and in a text of 1961, concerning the work of F. Távora, N. Portas argues that after the survey to regional architecture, made by Architects Union in the 50s, a "third way" comes up in Portuguese architecture, which uses tradition in the construction of modernity.

However, the intersection between the local cultural tradition and modern architecture does not always take this path. On the contrary, the acceptance of the Modern Movement is full of ambiguities, dualities and regionalist derives which are often associated with the construction of national identities.

In association with the ongoing research in the framework of the axis Architecture, Territory, Landscape of the Architectural Studies research group of CEAA, this conference aims to discuss the background, conditions, particularities, consequences and significance of local reception **of** and contribution **to** Modern Movement.

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MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN THE (RE)MAKING OF HISTORY
Schools and Museums in Greece

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Abstract

Challenging the long-established idea of the Mediterranean as the cradle of modern architecture, this contribution argues that due consideration should be given to moments of profound change, thereby splitting the Mediterranean into its fragments. We may thus restore to its extraordinary cities the many and varied architectural traditions that were able to nurture and blend: the much-debated mediterraneità *(Mediterraneity) turns out to be far less 'monolithic' in its expression.*
Along this line of thoughts, schools and museums built in Greece from 1923 to the aftermath of WWII may well reveal the role of architecture, when called upon to express the founding values of a collective identity. The dialectic between tradition and innovation, eclecticism and modernism, uncovers its meaning case by case.

Keywords: modern architecture, Mediterranean, school, museum, Greece

Eurocentric perspectives on the Mediterranean

Introducing *Orientalism* as the system of Western institutions established to claim an economic, political and military hegemony over the Orient, Edward Said (1978: 3) also decoded the mechanisms of this cultural colonization, thus marking a turning point in the monumental history of the Mediterranean world narrated by Fernand Braudel (1977). According to some scholars, the Mediterranean may even be understood as a "scientific invention," whose unitary conception was a by-product of French expeditions to Egypt, the Peloponnese and Algeria (Bourguet, Lepetit, Nordman & Sinarellis, 1998).

Benedetto Gravagnuolo (1994) and, more recently, Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino (2010), outlined an "architectural genealogy" of the

Modern Movement's engagement with the Mediterranean and its everyday vernacular.

Meanwhile, recent studies on the work of non-mainstream European architects, engineers and builders across the Mediterranean have opened new horizons in research, questioning the meaning, and inflection, of modern architecture in the different contexts where it took roots.[1]

The importance of the Mediterranean as a key destination for subsequent generation of young architects from different backgrounds remains an evergreen subject (Bonfante, 2014; Di Loreto, 2018), whose constant term of reference is the charismatic figure of Le Corbusier (Bonillo & Monnier, 1991; Gravagnuolo, 1997). Placing side by side the works by Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret, Fernand Pouillon and Alvaro Siza, the exhibition *Domus Mare Nostrum - Habiter le mythe méditerranéen* (Bonillo, 2014) emphasised once again the inextricable link between modern architecture and the Mediterranean. However, the "Mediterranean tradition" into which the work of Le Corbusier is interwoven seems all but monolithic. When identifying Le Corbusier's guiding stars, J.-L. Bonillo (1997) gave Istanbul equal footing with the Parthenon. Adolf Max Vogt (1996) argued that the *Voyage d'Orient* - and Ottoman architecture - left a permanent mark on the master who, according to Yorgos Simeoforidis (1997), was deeply fascinated by Byzantine architecture in the enchanting landscape of Mount Athos and the Greek islands.

CIAM IV and the new Greek schools

In the summer of 1933, CIAM members started their sea voyage across the Mediterranean from Marseille to Athens, where Le Corbusier uttered the famous words "the Acropolis made me a rebel" (Le Corbusier, 1933). Later on, they sailed to the Cyclades and, almost unexpectedly, found traditional houses

[1] The conference "Crossing Boundaries. Rethinking European architecture beyond Europe", Palermo, 13-16 April 2014, provided the author with an opportunity to take good stock of research in the field.

embodying the same timeless architectural solutions they had been working out for a decade or so: iconic combination of pure volumes, flat roofs and white walls without decoration.

Back in Athens, CIAM members visited some newly built schools designed by young Greek architects: dissymmetrical compositions, functional layouts, a geometry of pure volumes in perfect harmony with the Attic landscape. Local newspapers proudly reported on their comments of admiration (Giacumacatos & Godoli,1985: 9-10). According to Pierre Chareau, rather than copying western projects, Greeks architects had found their own path to modern architecture in response to the local climate. What is sure is that the scale of intervention and speed of execution - despite limited technical and financial means - marked an undeniable success for the new schools, which achieved considerable press coverage and attracted much scholarly work ever since.

However, it cannot pass unnoticed the correspondence between the Greek government engagement in such massive school building programme and the arrival in Greece of 1,300,000 refugees from Asia Minor, almost one fourth of the total population at the time.

Following the Greco-Turkish War, the Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923) had ratified the compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey, creating a refugee problem on a scale until then unknown, in regions already facing a demographic reshuffling. The presence of Asia Minor refugees led to an extensive economic development programme funded by foreign loans, while their settlement became part of the nation-building process.

As the place where, by learning Greek, a new cultural identity was to be forged, the school became a "dominating theme"[2] (Sedlmayr, 1948) somehow complementary to the church, and often equipped with a combination of indoor and outdoor facilities, functional and collective spaces forming a sort of microcosm.

[2] Sedlmayr suggests that, throughout history, some architectural themes acquired particular importance, attracting the best creative energies and providing a common ground – a centre - for all figurative arts.

Patroklos Karantinos, who designed up to forty schools (most of which actually built) dedicated a book to the new school buildings (1938), yet selecting the most responsive to the modernist canon. Even so, and despite the limited number of examples,[3] the book still conveys the pioneering effort made by Greek architects to move beyond the constraints imposed by the Ministry of Education, who supervised design, construction and construction management. The main quality of these buildings lays in their depicting what a modern school could be in villages, towns, and large urban centers in different regions of Greece. Certainly, not every school anticipated modern architecture. Young Greek architects were seeking a balance between local aesthetic idioms and the clean forms theorized by the Modern Movement. Some beautiful schools did feature simplified eclectic forms, bearing a tangible reference to the various architectural traditions then still vital in Greece.

New schools for a new Thessaloniki

If Patris II had continued his journey further East, CIAM participants were to contemplate the ruins of Thessaloniki and Smyrna, namely the end of the multiethnic Ottoman empire with its cosmopolitan port-cities. To Pierre Lavedan, the reconstruction of Thessaloniki in Greece posed on a scale until then unknown the problem of the city, as a work of architecture (Lavedan, 1922). Consequently, Thessaloniki may be considered a special observatory, because the building of new schools was part of a wider process of city reconstruction (Yerolympos, 1995). Capital of the so-called New Lands acquired after the Balkan Wars (1911-13), the city had been destroyed by fire in August 1917 and, by 1926, its Greek population had more than doubled.

[3] The total number of schools built, under construction, or planned, in 1931 reached almost 3000 (Giacumacatos & Godoli,1985: 6).

The Mevlevi Hané school complex (1926) designed by Nikos Mitsakis was built on the area previously occupied by the monastery of Mevlevi Dervishes (1615) which had long been a spiritual centre for the Muslim community. Here Mitsakis started experimenting with elements of Byzantine architecture - arches, columns, capitals – simplified and adapted to become part of a modern composition. Neo-Byzantine was to characterise the city rising from its ashes following Hebrard's reconstruction plan, marking a clear break with the Ottoman past to recapture its Hellenic identity.

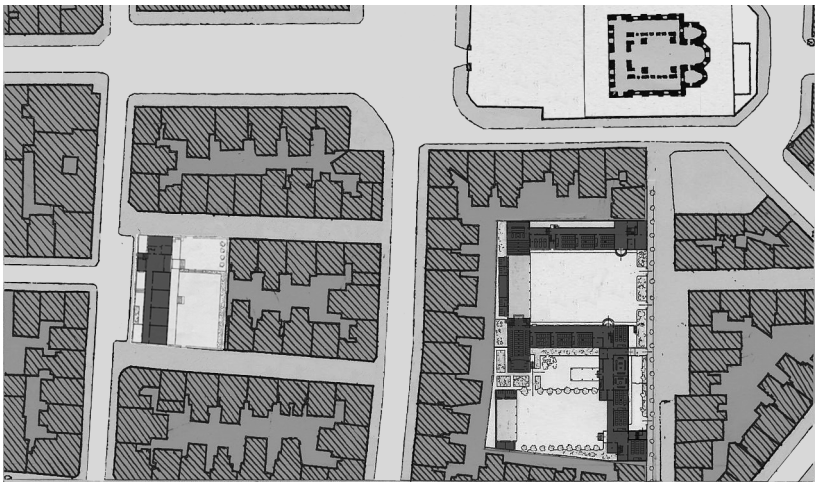

Figure 1. Nikos Mitsakis, Aghia Sofia school complex, 1928-32 (right) and Secondary School for Girls, 1933 (left), Thessaloniki (author's reconstruction).

In the Aghia Sofia school complex (1928-32), Mitsakis hovered between a modernist volumetric syntax and an eclectic lexicon, reinterpreting Byzantine elements as simple coloured volumes. By adopting a two-courtyards layout, he arranged the elementary school, the gymnasium and the Jewish schools so that they might be accessed independently, leaving the resulting areas for open-air activities, one of which directly facing onto the street reaching the nearby church of Aghìa Sofia. Mitsakis questioned the role of the school as generative urban element at a time of great ethno-social instability (Darques, 2000), when the city around it was also being built.

A few blocks away, Dimitris Pikionis designed the Model Experimental School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, established in 1934 to meet the needs and demands of a new society to come. The school features a series of articulated volumes around a steep urban block, as sort of "Macedonian diorama" with a courtyard on two levels at its centre.

With this building, Dimitris Pikionis exemplified his idea of "re-invention":

> Form is the result of many efforts by many souls. Architects should not invent short-lived forms, they should instead "re-invent" existing forms to meet our current needs. Form can join our souls in an ideal symbol. But this is not a one man task: this cannot begin and end with the work of a single person. Architects and artists should not invent ephemeral forms, rather should they reinterpret the perfect forms of tradition in line with current needs and constraints. This is not just a mental exercise, it also involves emotions. A text from ancient Greece describes three kind of creations: a) the "backward-looking creation" indicating our link to the past; b) the "prevident creation" indicating our way of dealing with the present and c) the "lovable creation" indicating our feelings as opposite and complementary to logic. These three definitions have been brought together. The "international" implying the relationship between different races must come to terms with the "national" manifesting the distinguishing character of each race. (Pikionis, 1991: 6).

Archetypes and the modern lexicon: two museums by P. Karantinos

While Hans Sedlmayr included the museum among the modern "dominating themes" (Sedlmayr, 1948), Lewis Mumford defined museums as urban institutions *par excellence* (Mumford, 1975: 639). Benedict Anderson emphasised the vital role of museums in the self-representational narrative of rising nation states (Andreson, 1983). From a non-eurocentric perspective, museums provide an extraordinary opportunity to decode the dialectic between eclecticism and modernism, tradition and innovation, uncovering its meaning

case by case. In many cases, museums became instrumental in dissociating the present from the recent past and selecting from history a past that could best consolidate an idealized vision of the future.

A key figure in the debate about new school buildings, Patroklos Karantinos also leads us to the heart of the debate on modern museum architecture, in constant a tension between place and abstraction, between rootedness and exportable lessons. Karantinos was among the founding members of the Greek group of CIAM (1932), and played a decisive part in connecting Greek architects with the central European Modern Movement (Giacumacatos, 2003; Fessas-Emmanouil, 2005). Born in Constantinople of Kefalonian parents, Karantinos studied architecture at Athens Polytechnic at a time when the newly founded Faculty of Architecture was defining its cultural orientation. In Athens, Karantinos was introduced to traditional architecture by Dimitris Pikionis. On moving to Paris instead (1927), he became familiar with the work of Auguste Perret (collaborating with him for a few months), Tony Garnier and Le Corbusier. Back in Greece, Karantinos took an active part in the local debate. An example of his militant attitude is his objection to the idea of housing the new Parliament in the old Royal Palace, for which he proposed conversion into a central museum complex (1929).

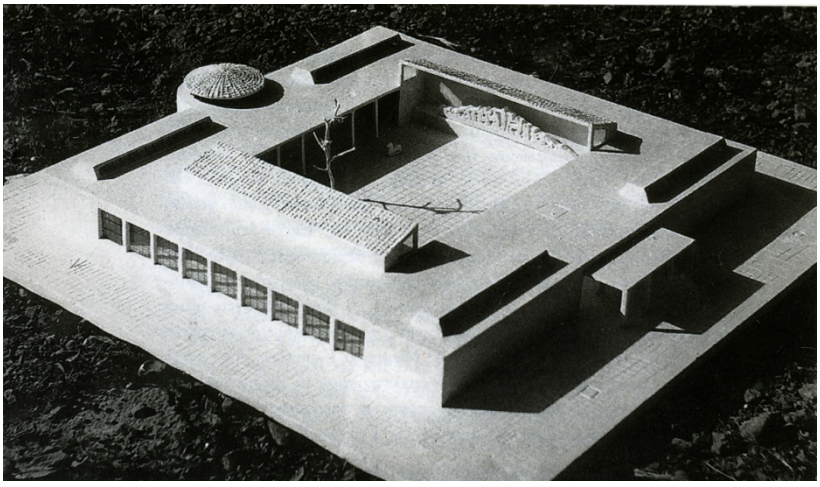

Figure 2. Patroklos Karantinos, model to scale of the Olympia archaeological museum (first solution), ca. 1952 (from Giacumacatos, 2003).

In 1933, Karantinos seized the opportunity of Athens' international exposure to show CIAM delegates his school at the feet of the Acropolis. In 1934, while preparing the book about the new schools, he organized the First Exhibition of Modern Architecture in Greece.

Karantinos' early museum projects at Argos (1936) and Corfu (1938) were followed by other commissions after the Second World War, when he was called upon to study the extension of major National museums – at Iraklion and Athens – and design new archaeological museums at Olympia (1952-66) and Thessaloniki (1960-62).

The civil war (1946-49), and a prolonged economic crisis, rendered the Greek aftermath of World War II even more critical than elsewhere.

At that critical juncture, most Greek architects joined unconditionally modern architecture (Doumanis, 1984), whereas Karantinos – in defining the typological and functional character of his museums projects - continued exploring the archetypes of classical architecture. When working at the Olympia project, he reflected upon the "distinguishing character" of museums in Mediterranean countries (Karantinos, 1954). Recalling a trip to Olympia on a clear winter morning, he argued that works like the pediments of the temple of Zeus, the Nike of Paionios or the Hermes of Praxiteles were originally created into the light. If locked inside, these works were to appear as frozen Titans deprived of every vibration of life. Thus, in exhibition spaces for sculptures, the Mediterranean light demanded an architecture of its own, a spatial syntax for light to reanimate the ancient works of art. In his first project for the Olympia Karantinos envisaged a silent courtyard building where antiquities would stand out, a reinterpretation of the atrium - the house of the ancients - in a symmetrical layout. The actual museum built in the late fifties followed instead a basilica-type layout, where "Titans" received light filtering from the roof of the central nave.

Karantinos' design for the archaeological museum at Thessaloniki may be understood as a late contribution to the long process of reconstruction.

Displaying Hellenistic and Byzantine artifacts[4] in a modernist space, the new archaeological museum evoked the mythical origin of the city of Cassander and its past glories in a suspended atmosphere meant to arouse an emotive response from the visitors, whose modern spirit would be enhanced when confronted with the precious works of art.

Figure 3. Patroklos Karantinos, entrance to the archaeological museum, Theassaloniki (from Giacumacatos, 2003).

Initially, Karantinos worked on a series of archetypes - the atrium, the cross-shaped layout, the circular plan - finally adopting a central patio encompassed by a double exhibition circuit: one for Byzantine art and another for archaeological findings. The low height and the ambient light – resulting from the articulation of the cross-section and a system of movable slats – combined to achieve an anti-monumental character. However, like a sort of modern temple, the building rose from a basement. Reaching out to the entrance colonnade where visitors could find artefacts anticipating the museum collections, this basement blends the museum into the surrounding public spaces, which would in turn acquire new meanings following the visitors' experiences of the exhibition halls. Slender columns, horizontal slabs, glass walls and glass blocks combine to achieve a rarefied atmosphere, aimed at contextualizing the visitor as a modern man in front of the city's artistic heritage.

[4] While the building programme was defined in the 1940s, the decision to include the Byzantine collection in the new museum dates back to 1960.

Concluding remarks

When challenging the long-established idea of the Mediterranean as a polar star of modern architecture, the Mediterranean is unavoidably epitomised by its port cities, bearing concrete evidence to their varied cultures that they were able to nurture and blend, and to the cosmopolitan period which marked the complex and passage to modernity. Centuries of cultural coexistence, according to Maurice Cerasi, rendered Mediterranean port cities similar to the floating settlement of Southeast Asia: a set of barges of all sizes and types, anchored to their hinterland but connected to each other and constantly shifting (Cerasi, 2005: 9-10). After decades of International Eclecticism, the Mediterranean townscape was caught once more into the cross-fire of stereotypes: "timeless architecture", "classical archetypes", and the rising imagery of the International Style.

While research on Mediterranean cosmopolitanism has gained momentum from various disciplinary perspectives (Dumont & Georgeon, 1992; Meijer, 1999; Driessen, 2005; Kolluoğlu & Toksöz, 2010; Mansel, 2010; Lafi & Freitag, 2014), some attempts have been made to splitting the Mediterranean into its fragments (Carlotti, Nencini & Posocco, 2015).

Studying in depth a number of case studies, particularly when dealing with the actual (historically contextualised) construction/reconstruction of the cities concerned, the much-debated of *mediterraneità* (Mediterraneity) turns to be far less "monolithic". If (re)reading the adventure of the modern in Greece focusing on schools and museums may undermine the Mediterranean myth, it may also help us recapture the ultimate scope of architecture, called upon to synthesize and transmit the founding values of a given community.

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ROGÉRIO DE AZEVEDO'S REGIONALIST DRIFT

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Abstract

The work of architect Rogério de Azevedo—mostly built between the late 1920s and the 1940s—always included the recourse to regionalism, whether as a response to government programs or as the architect's own initiative. Decisive for him was the between the city project the rural project
Despite the State's ability to work with regional types that could be constructed in series, purportedly in line with local sensitivities, a number of constraints and technical led the architect to adopt techniques and to appropriate languages into a singularly personal interpretation in which the modern and the vernacular are combined.
If in some cases State order was determinant, in others, particularly in projects of the late 1920s and early 1940s, the architect and his vision of the relationship between the placements, of the available materials and the expressive values that inform his work, are the reason of being of his works.

Keywords: Regionalism, Nationalism, Modern Architecture, Vernacular Architecture.

This paper discusses the public works of Rogério de Azevedo, namely those commissioned by and within the context of the Direcção Geral de Edifícios e Monumentos Nacionais (DGEMN) (Directorate-General of Buildings and National Monuments) and the Secretariado de Propaganda Nacional (SPN) (Secretariat of National Propaganda), later known as the Secretariado Nacional de Informação (SNI) (National Secretariat of Information), during the 1930s and 1940s. From the beginning of his professional activity, Azevedo engaged both in private commissions and public work; his public work being as vast as his private projects.

As such, this paper addresses public works commissions which are evidently characterized by a nationalist context, and politically associated with the Estado Novo[1].

In fact, the historiography of this architectural period has been heavily influenced by a first wave of investigation, and it is still common to come across clichés and ideas that offer little or no resistance to serious research.

As Pedro Vieira de Almeida argued, if the work of this generation of architects was especially sensitive to the multitude of manners and a surprising versatility of languages, the case of Rogério de Azevedo was particularly astonishing (1986, p. 121).

Indeed, to exemplify this versatility, one often turns to the double projects Garage / Building headquarters of the newspaper *O Comércio do Porto*.

Rogério de Azevedo had an intense career defined by the refusal of modernity as the single paradigm for a formal pursuit. In works marked by a clear sense of modernity, we can first turn to the headquarters of the newspaper *O Comércio do Porto*, designed between 1928 and 1930, and characterized by an effort towards modernization, when compared to the classicizing eclecticism which had developed. Second, to the garage of the same newspaper, a structure contiguous to the head office building and designed between 1930-1932. The garage, a masterpiece of both Azevedo and the modern movement in Porto, sets tradition against innovation, and is characterized by a 'magnificent sense of mass, strong formal coherence and a distinctive artistic strength' (Almeida, 1986, p. 121). Finally, the daycare at *O Comércio do Porto*, from 1930, as well as the "Maurício Rialto" building, dated from 1941-1945, innovative due both to its vertical design and the relationship it established with public space.

The work of Rogério de Azevedo's was also characterized by the pursuit of a regionalist architectural idiom, as exemplified by the regionalized project-type for the primary schools in the center and north of the country, the Salazar school

[1] The Estado Novo [New State], by some also called Second Portuguese Republic, is the name of the authoritarian, autocrat and corporate political regime that existed in Portugal for 41 years, from the promulgation of the Constitution of 1933 until the April 25 Revolution of 1974.

and canteen, in Santa Comba Dão, from 1938, the pousadas regionais (regional guesthouses) of Marão, Serém and Serra da Estrela, all designed between 1938-1939, and finally the Hotel Infante de Sagres, from 1945, this last construction having been undertaken with the Português Suave style already firmly in place.

Alongside a wide-ranging program of intervention and restoration in built historical heritage, the Estado Novo developed a number of infrastructure and facilities projects in the 1930s.

Portugal, mostly rural and with a low level of economic development, was the object of a methodical and structuring politics of public works.

In the resulting bustle of 1930s, the more talented and innovative architects of Rogério de Azevedo's generation 'built the new panorama of the regime's works' (Tostões, 2003, p. 113). They further explored, without constrains, international idioms with which they had already experimented in their private commissions, relying on new construction methods, in an evident 'adaptation of modernism to the expectations of the authorities' (Martins, 1999, p. 120) and the cessation of a historicist and regionalist pursuit on the part of the State.

Nonetheless, many of the facilities programs which were developed at the national level make use of the regionalist project-type, highlighting particular elements and materials from their traditional forms and in a manner both conscious and intentional.

Such regional concerns do not appear to be connected to the ideological stance of the commissioning party nor to inspiring models of supposedly nationalist design, particularly because they did not yet exist at the time.

Just as in other projects, the Ministry of Public Works also entrusts these project-types to modernist architects outside its own structures, thereby sidestepping the organization's insufficiencies while, at the same time, improving cost control measures, easing planning, and also increasing the Ministry's ability to intervene.

The preference for the modern, made by this generation of architects with early modernist training, who alternated between regionalism and historicist eclecticism, is an ad hoc approach that is contingent upon the building's purpose, its localization, and the materials used in its construction. For them, modernism was merely one additional style at their disposal, a new way of building, integrating a functionalist and rationalist concept of architecture (Martins, 1999, p. 121).

On the other hand, the increasing use of international models in the construction of modernist public facilities is understood by those in power as yet another "style". A style moderated by monumentality and the values of dignity inherent to the public work. At this time, the idea of modernity, allied to that of progress, also serves to increase the State's political strength.

Rogério de Azevedo did not escape the contradictions that characterized colleagues of his generation. Similarly to them, he projected some public facilities using a diversity of idioms, as illustrated by the town halls of Vila Flor (beginning of the 1930s) and Póvoa de Lanhoso (1937), as well as the building of the port authority of Viana do Castelo (1933).

Figure 1. The garden and town hall of Vila Flor, 1949. (http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_94LABD71AQg/TFlDYjJzUcI/AAAAAAAAAE2I/amnr6YAjuLU/s1600/Vila+Flor+Antiga+++C3%A2mara+Municipal+%281949%29.jpg. 16/6/11, 3pm)

Some examples of works promoted by the Ministry of Public Works and undertaken as regionalized project-types are the penitentiary buildings, the post office building, the medical facilities (and sanitoriums) of the Assistência Nacional aos Tuberculosos (National Tuberculosis Assistance Program) or the Bairros das Casas Económicas (Economical Housing Neighborhoods). Through his work, Rogério de Azevedo is somehow related to these last three groups.

Perhaps the most paradigmatic case of programs achieved through project-types is the regionalized approach to the Escolas Primárias Oficiais (Official Primary Schools) which, built in series from 1935 on, evolved in 1944 into Escolas Centenárias (Centenary Schools).

The program of pousadas regionais (regional inns) of the SNI, from 1938-1939, although not a program of projects-type, was based on the prerequisite of regionalism, *benefitting* from the same limitations as the Escolas Primárias Oficiais. This program was also premised on the idea of a building model, an evidently political approach and the result of the increasing affirmation of values in accordance with the spirit of the Comemorações Centenárias da Independência e da Restauração Nacionais (Centenary Commemorations of Independence and National Restoration) of 1940, of which the program was a part.

By 1932, the DGEMN had an architecture department which was directed by Guilherme Rebello de Andrade and was able to design elementary schools. The efforts undertaken by this department resulted in the 1933 presentation of a *Memory/Memória*[2] defining the rules that should be followed in the design of such school buildings:

- The projects must be conceived '*in harmony with the characteristics of regional architecture, accomplished not only through the use of typical regional materials but also through climatic variations*'[3].

[2] *Ante-projecto do Plano Geral de Tipos-Regionaes de Escolas Primarias Oficiais a Construir em Série – Memória*. Lisbon, 14th December 1933. Signed. Chief of Department, Arch. Guilherme Rebello de Andrade. *Processo de Expediente-Geral*, DGEMN –DGCE archive.
[3] *Ante-projecto do Plano Geral de Tipos-Regionaes de Escolas …*, p. 1.

- The aim was for local people to assimilate the new buildings, and thereby to avoid hurting their 'ethnic sensibilities' through 'the use of exotic elements of forced "rationalism" that scorned tradition'[4].
- On the other hand, the correct understanding of «rationalism» uses and combines *'local elements with new construction'* [5].

Three main conditions are established for plan conception:

1. Based on the plan for a single school-unit place, to resolve the plans for subsequent schools;
2. To conceive of these plans in order to make use of all land regardless of its northern exposure;
3. To standardize school construction by grouping together schools, even if such groups include schools with a different number of seats.

Figure 2. Elementary schools in Bairro de Casas Económicas of Ramalde. Porto, 1953. Teófilo Rego Archive, Casa da Imagem, Fundação Manuel Leão, PT-FML-TR-PES-16-068.

[4] *Ante-projecto do Plano Geral de Tipos-Regionaes de Escolas …*, p. 1.
[5] *Ante-projecto do Plano Geral de Tipos-Regionaes de Escolas …*, p. 1.

This document comes to constitute the foundation of the new regionalized project-types developed by architects Raul Lino and Rogério de Azevedo which will receive approval in 1935. Lino designed the schools in southern Portugal and Rogério de Azevedo the ones in the north and center.

According to the *Memória*, the project's use of space is designed to be at a bare minimum. The central space of the school is the classroom.

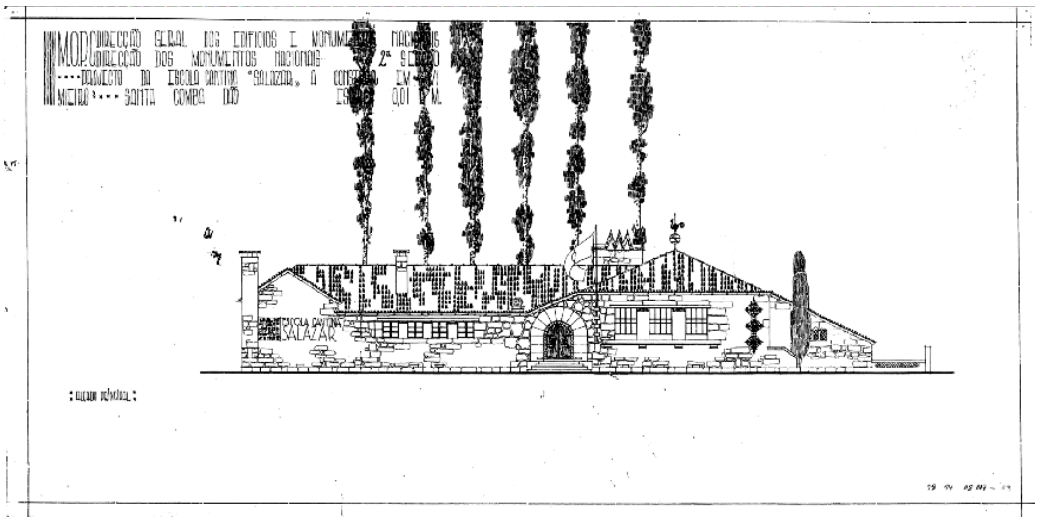

Figure 3. Escola-Cantina Salazar (Salazar School-Canteen). Vimieiro, Santa Comba Dão. Main elevation. DGEMN Archive: SIPA, IPA nº PT021814080009, Desenho.009487.

Apart from the regionalized school-types, in 1938 Rogério de Azevedo designed the special project of the Salazar Canteen-School in Santa Comba Dão. Throughout his career, Rogério de Azevedo had built upon several basic elements (module: classroom, recess area/porch, teachers' room, canteen, toilets), '*typologies, whose adaptability and flexibility of solutions found their maximal expression in the special project for the Salazar School-Canteen*', '*a work that synthetizes the values defined in the previous regionalized projecttypes*', The Salazar Canteen-School also makes reference to the 1930 project of the Lourosa Primary School (Pimentel, 2014, p. 55), the origin of almost all his school projects.

The new project-types of the schools of the Plano dos Cententários, approved in 1944, were based on the regionalized project-types of 1935. However, '*the introduction of other concepts and requirements would come to modify, as well as dilute, the way in which each architect expressed himself*' (Beja, 1990, p. 248), thus profoundly altering the particular character of the buildings designed by Rogério de Azevedo and Raul Lino.

Indeed, the next two decades witnessed the progressive effacement of the architects' individual design with these structures having been reduced, though a process of increasingly impoverished interventions, to standardized, expressionless buildings with hints of a stagnant and decorative regional picturesque, finally transforming the school-spaces in a single type: the courtyard(s)/shed(s) and classroom(s).

On the other hand, in 1938, with the integration of tourism into the preliminary program of the Centenary Celebrations, in line with the *política do espírito* (politics of spirit) created by António Ferro in the SPN,

> a global and integrated propaganda policy, of psycho-social action, of aesthetic lesson, of socio-cultural transformation: the cinema, the theater, the newspaper, the radio, the festivity, the poster, the shop window, the exhibition, the decoration, the 'good taste', the graphic design, the advertising, the tourism, the invention of the regime's modern cultural façade (Portela, 1982, p. 59),

Apart from the historicist and folk-inspired tourist routes, other networks are considered fundamental: the tourist offices and state-run guesthouses. To meet the needs of tourism propaganda, a nationwide network of pousadas regionais is created across the country.

> [A]n innovative idea at the time, which connected an obviously modernizing dynamism—through [a] new [sense of] comfort and the systemic/national characteristic of the initiative—with a conservative and regionalist impulse which called for the 'return to traditionalism' (Fernandes, 1999, p. 159).

In this way, António Ferro combines the necessary standardization of the tourism sector—countering individualism and amateur initiatives—to the concept of difference, a country that coexists with but is distinct from others, paying attention to folk resources, instilling them in their intermediaries—the various tourism commissions and councils under the direction of the municipalities.

These different aspects are summarized, according to Salazar, in the campaign for the *reaportuguesamento* ('relusification') *of Portugal*, making Portugal Portuguese again (Pina, 1988, p. 151) a movement inspired by the '*integral ideas of a mythical ruralism, nostalgic for [Portugal's] peasant origins, which was applied through the Estado Novo's regionalist representations*' (Melo, 2001, p. 252). Such efforts sought the transformation of the image of Portugal, a unification of all the different countries within the same country. Salazar had set the theme and António Ferro reinforces and clarifies the idea.

In August 1940, the first state guesthouse, Estalagem do Lidador, is inaugurated. Located in a remodelled inn, this guesthouse comes to define, at a practical level, the model for a small hotel business which ought to be '*healthy, peasant-like*'[6] (Ferro, 1949, pp.48-49).

With SPN as the custodian of national '*good taste*'[7], on the 10th of April 1942, the first of seven purpose-built pousadas opens its doors, the Pousada of Santa Luzia, in Elvas. The first of the seven small hotels that should not look like hotels, these '*living models*' spread throughout the country, with an interior designed by the Serviços de Turismo (Tourism Services) and the technicians of SPN, and where the guests should '*constantly*' feel that they are in the region where the guesthouse is located, without a break of the '*continuity between the*

[6] Quoted from a speech by António Ferro on 16 August 1940 during the opening ceremony of the Estalagem do Lidador, in Óbidos.
[7] In June 1941, as a consequence of its activities, SPN launched the *Panorama* (1941-1974), a Portuguese magazine on art and tourism. In its inaugural edition, the editorial described the magazine as a place in which the liveliest and most characteristic aspects of the country could be evoked; the "Campaign for Good Taste" was already announced in the inaugural edition. *Panorama*, n.º 1, ano I, 1941.

indoors and the outdoors, between the house and the surrounding land'[8](Ferro, 1949, pp.68-

69). New pousadas continue to open until 1948, when the phase of the *politica do espírito* applied to tourism and, in particular, to the regional pousadas, finally comes to a close, ending a process begun in the late 1930s.

The inspiration for the concept and the program of the new facilities comes from Spain: the *parador* state-run hotels, but especially the *albergues de carretera*, the inns along Spanish roadways.

With a plan '*then considered to be very not urban, mainly geared towards regional spaces in rural areas of the country*' (Fernandes, 1999, p. 160), the projects for the pousadas to be built by DGEMN, seven in total, are entrusted in 1938 to three architects of the modernist generation who had already shown themselves to be able to dialogue with traditional values: Miguel Jacobetty Rosa, Rogério de Azevedo e Veloso Reis Camelo.

The sites are considered as a strategy of intervention in the territory. They are aimed at endowing the country with modern hotel structures and seek to meet the requirements, not in the abstract, but of objective intervention in national territory, '*building a coherent and rational structure*' (Lobo, 2006, p. 44) and offering continuity to what had previously been argued for these types of structures.

Rogério de Azevedo is charged with the projects for the three pousadas in the north: São Gonçalo, in Serra do Marão; Santo António, in Serèm, Vale do Vouga; and São Lourenço, in Serra da Estrela.

Rogério de Azevedo played a decisive role in choosing the sites where his pousadas would be built. Working in collaboration with Januário Godinho, Azevedo additionally committed to using locally-sourced materials for construction.

[8] Quoted from a speech by António Ferro on 10 Abril 1942 during the opening ceremony of the Pousada de Elvas.

Among the seven pousadas simultaneously projected and begun (the Pousada de Santiago do Cacém constituted an exception, and was the penultimate to open), special reference must be made to the pousadas of Elvas and of Marão. Both have a complex structure distinct from the domestic scale of housing, not only due to the interpretation of the program but also to their formal composition and land implantation. Whereas the pousadas located in Serém and in S. Brás de Alportel are those that most adhere to a common type, and approach a domestic scale, the Pousada de São Lourenço, with its uncluttered and compact quality and its strong foundation, breaks with this possible identification. The Pousada de Santiago do Cacém, which also presents a foundation, is characterized by a strong sense of axiality. Finally, the Pousada de São Martinho do Porto most approaches the idea of a housing block, unrelated to the landscape (Pimentel, 2015, pp. 329-330).

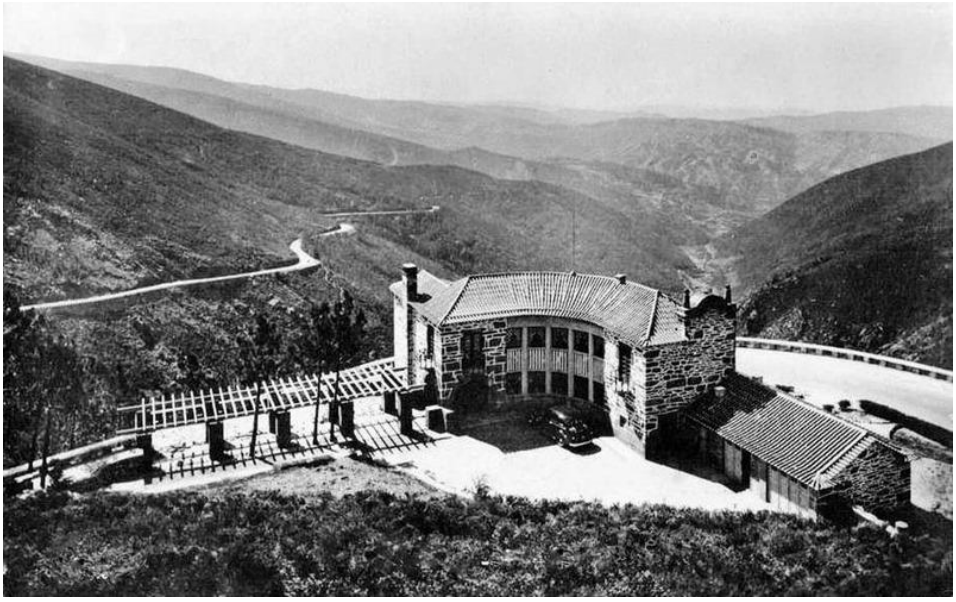

Figure 4. Pousada de São Gonçalo, Serra do Marão. Archival photograph (http://restosdecoleccao.blogspot.pt/2012/01p rimeiras-pousadas-de-portugal.html, 21 May 2012, 6pm)

The regionalist program was achieved through seven very different small constructions at the scale of a private house or a small hotel, making use of the '*programmatic distribution of levels*' (Lobo, 2004, p. 89) and the panoramic

dining room composed of articulated, cylindrical and prismatic volumes of a modernist approach, concealed under the weight of the eaves, the arcades, the porches, and the pergolas, and the roofs covered in stone or in whitewashed plaster, depending on the region. These are carefully sited buildings that evidence an uninterrupted continuity with the topography and which, strategically dominating the surrounding territory, are enveloped by the scenery in an expressive openness of interior spaces to the landscape.

Figure 5. Pousada de São Lourenço, Serra da Estrela/Manteigas. Photograph published in Mafalda FERRO; Rita FERRO - Retrato de uma Família. Fernanda de Castro, António Ferro, António Quadros. Lisboa: Círculo de Leitores, 1999, p. 161.

In buildings, such as the *gesture* of the Pousada do Marão, the *stability* of Serém and the *unclutteredness* of Serra da Estrela, the dynamism of volume composition, the organic articulation of the volumes spaces with the topography, the controlled scale and the use of construction materials typical of each region are reflected in the expressionism of its textures and tactile expression. These constructions are solidly anchored to the ground, carefully embedded into the

terrain in uninterrupted continuity with the topography, resulting in a strategic domination of the surrounding territory.

These are buildings which reveal '*conceptual schemes that anticipate formal approaches*' (Tavares, 2012, p. 49), namely the recognition/*choice* of location as a starting-point for the definition of a strategy. A task which, as Manuel Botelho wrote in 1987 for the journal *rA*, fundamentally rests upon

> the articulation, relationship and hierarchy of spaces between themselves and in relation to the exterior. Such concerns, preceding questions of idiom or of material use, reveal a profound comprehension of the essence of architecture (Tavares, 2012, p. 49),

together with the definition of the environments to consolidate, in an ordered and coherent synthesis of constructive systems and formal suggestions of diverse origins.

In short, Rogério de Azevedo was indeed an architect of his generation. Conscious of the times, Azevedo was always open to new ideas without ever ceasing to be a disciple of Marques da Silva, or renouncing his Beaux-Arts training.

His classical training did not prevent him from embracing modernism and the new techniques and idioms of the twentieth century, neither did it hinder his recourse to non-erudite practices. Thus, Azevedo always remained free from the mere reproduction of models, formulas or ideals, instead having achieved in some of his works a synthesis of sometimes dispersed and distant practices and images.

In accord with his vision of architectural practice, the works of Rogério de Azevedo are comprised of a diversity of styles and architectural forms, yet they are not entirely dissimilar to his colleagues of the same generation. Like them, owing to his classic humanist training, Azevedo was prepared to employ modern values, and was at times himself aware of the innovative quality of his proposals.

Reconciling modernity with tradition, his practice does not appear to have provoked in him a conflict between modern, traditional or even vernacular values, nor did it prompt a contemporaneous critical debate. His authorial imprint was not grounded in the formal coherence between one project and another, nor did he endeavor to create such consistency.

Belonging to a generation of architects with early modernist training, for whom the exercise of the modern, alternating between regionalism and historical eclecticism, was not an ideological, social or philosophical choice, Rogério de Azevedo devised an approach to the design process that precluded theoretical reflection. These were a series of isolated choices, dependent upon the building's purpose, its localization, and the materials used for construction. For this generation of architects, the modern was just another available style, a new way of building which integrated a functionalist and rationalist vision of architecture.

Indeed, Rogério de Azevedo follows an autonomous path in which the classic, traditional and modern are mixed. Even when his approach was challenged, Azevedo never considered himself cornered and, instead, constantly renewed his capacities and preparation as a builder. While it is doubtlessly a path which is difficult to fit within applicable discursive or formal categories, Azevedo's architectural practice offers the continuity of a generational transmission of a certain kind of project design of which the architect Januário Godinho is an example.

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PAPERS

THE PALACE AS TYPE
Finding Regionalism in Soviet Modernism

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Abstract

In a building campaign which spanned across all Soviet Republics, public "palace" buildings were the cornerstone of the architectural image which defined a political regime. At the time of their construction, the palaces were categorized primarily by program—wedding palaces, sports palaces, cinema palaces, youth palaces and cultural palaces. This paper will compare key sites of Soviet modernism (1955-1991) in three countries surrounding the Black Sea: Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia. Using these countries as case studies, this paper will discuss two important aspects of regionalism found in these works—first, the relationship between a universal program type and the local specificity signalled by the building's original design through the use of specific construction materials, ornamentation, and cultural references; second, the transformation the building underwent after 1991 adopting or rejecting new regional affiliations related to its geographical and political location.

Keywords: Soviet architecture, regionalism, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia

The classic Soviet film, *The Irony of Fate* portrays the plight of Zhenya Lukashin, a helpless romantic who mistakenly ends up on a flight from Moscow to Lenningrad after a ruckus New Year's Eve event. Unaware of his mistake and believing himself still to be in Moscow, Zhenya gives his address to a taxi driver and is promptly driven to a concrete housing tower. Still unaware of his true location, Zhenya stumbles into the building to find apartment number twelve where his key easily opens the lock. When it is later discovered that a mirrored version of his Moscow apartment exists in Lenningrad inhabited by an attractive young woman, comedy ensues.

The running gag of Soviet architecture was one of repetition across the entire Soviet Union regardless of local context. In popular Soviet imagination, each apartment block or government building was exactly the same—sparse, efficient, and most notably, grey. This stereotype of Soviet architecture today is not so

different, especially as it has been understood in the West. However, here I would like to offer a parallel reading of Soviet architecture, one which focuses on the unique, the special, and the one-off.

Often overlooked in the drab narrative of Soviet architecture are the large public buildings—often referred to as palaces (*dvorets*). In contrast to the well-known repetitive Soviet housing blocks, these unique buildings demand closer attention as a new generation of architects re-discover their international importance and as we continue to understand architecture's role in shaping and being shaped by ideas of regionalism and nationalism.

In a building campaign which spanned across all Soviet Republics, public "palace" buildings were the cornerstone of the architectural image which defined a political regime. At the time of their construction, the palaces were categorized primarily by program—wedding palaces, sports palaces, cinema palaces, youth palaces and cultural palaces. The term "palace" is often deceiving to a Western audience, as no English term so gracefully straddles the void between royal residence and public meeting house as the Russian term *dvorets*. The palaces were no doubt grand, but their ornamentation was modern, their gestures more expressive than classical. Much like a royal palace, each building created a holistic world and presented itself as a discrete object.

But, for a moment, consider Soviet palaces in another way—a nodal network of distributed ideas, a catalog of possible types. Not as a collection of objects, but as an architectural ensemble. No single project re-invents the type, yet, each instantiation of the palace builds upon the previous body of work. Soviet palaces were an experiment in mass customization. Palaces showcased the progressive cultural and artistic richness of each republic, and images of newly constructed palaces were publicized in tourism literature spread throughout the Soviet Union (Wheeler, 2016, p. 29). The paradox of the palace, and what distinguishes it from common stereotypes of Soviet architecture, is in its standardization of originality.

Although the Soviet Union aimed to unify millions of people under a single governmental system, its people were diverse; they spoke over 100 different languages and included many different ethnic groups. These differences were reflected in their architecture as well. Although the typologies were universal across the Soviet Republics, each palace reflected differences in the choice of materials, forms, and ornamentation. As framed by these case studies, the *region* is often influenced more by politics than geography. The region is a series of political, ethnic, and social delineations with spatial, formal and aesthetic consequences. As Alan Colqhoun writes, "In a sense, the nation-state is the modern "region"—a region in which culture is coextensive with political power" (Colqhoun, 1997, p. 20).

From a systemic perspective, architects value Soviet palaces' adherence to strict typologies and repetition of structural systems, but as this paper will argue, in order to save these works, it might be best to discover the forgotten regionalism in Soviet modernism. This paper will compare key sites of Soviet modernism (1955-1991) in three countries surrounding the Black Sea: Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia. Using these countries as case studies, this paper will discuss two important aspects of regionalism found in these works—first, the relationship between a universal program type and the local specificity signalled by the building's original design through the use of specific construction materials, ornamentation, and cultural references; second, the transformation the building underwent after 1991 adopting or rejecting new regional affiliations related to its geographical and political location.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, its architecture survived. As Lenin statues fell across the newly independent countries, public palaces were often spared from decommunization attempts as they were too integral to the infrastructural and communal integrity of each city to be destroyed. Instead, they adapted. Today, these buildings are located in a group of countries with diverse political structures and economic situations, not to mention relationships to their Soviet past. When looking at this collection of architectural works, it is not the original fusing of national, indigenous or foreign elements of architecture which makes them compelling, but in their fallout. Almost as in a game of

chance, these buildings are sprinkled throughout Eastern Europe and are challenged to survive an ever-shifting context. Given their unique relationships to issues of nationality and regionalism, the buildings which exist today located in post-Soviet independent nations can serve as case studies of architecture's ability to weather tumultuous times.

Program's plight

Several social and economic issues threaten the survival of Soviet architecture. The first well-discussed issue is the general acceptance of Soviet architecture through its symbolic and nationalistic intentions. In 1956, Arthur Voyce reported that Russian "architecture, even if it is for utilitarian purposes, is a form of education—aesthetic, political, and social—and that is why the Metro…has been conceived not only as a means of transport but also as a source of inspiration, as a symbol of a finer culture and a promise of a happier and more abundant life to come" (Voyce, 1956, p. 111). Unlocking the societal meaning of Soviet architecture today is nearly impossible. The complex relationship between individual and collective understandings of Soviet architecture in post-Soviet states is too daunting a web to attempt to untangle. What can be observed, however, is that these feelings are in flux. Particularly, as a new generation with little or no memory of the Soviet Union (but possibly a very clear memory of its fallout) take the reigns of the power structures of society. This change happens slowly, however, and with both forward and backward progression. The contemporary hurdle now is to disentangle the economic connotations from the past political ideals.

The second issue threatening Soviet palaces, is their reliance on a clearly defined program. If, as John McMorrough has suggested in "Notes on the Adaptive Re-use of Program," we should understand modernist buildings "in which the integration of programmatic source is directly and legibly made manifest on the form of the building" as the exception, and not the rule, then a study of Soviet palaces is a study of exceptions (McMorrough, 2006). The alignment between form and function in this collection is unique in its ability to

exaggerate functionality to the point of exuberance of form. Whereas an earlier generation of Soviet architects embraced modernism's structural efficiency, technological improvements, and formal austerity, the generation of architects working between 1955 and 1991 used an obsession with program as an alibi for formal exuberance. This distinct correlation between form and program is one of the striking features of Soviet palaces and can either cause challenges for their reuse today or be identified as the reason for their sustained survival. Palaces rely on the sustainability not only of their physical construction, but on a social and cultural sustainability of their specified program. For example, the many cinemas, wedding halls, youth palaces, or marketplaces rely on a steady stream of patrons who will support economically the specific programs specified by the architecture. As cultural and economic shifts continue to happen in post-Soviet public spaces, it is unclear whether their survival is assured.

Regionalism, again?

If early Soviet Constructivism had stripped buildings of any ornamentation or reference to national styles or ethnic distinction, later phases of Soviet modernism (1955-1991) saw a return to the incorporation of ornamentation reflective of regional difference. As early as the 1939 VSKhV exhibition in Moscow vernacular motifs were used in a calculated attempt to rebrand the Union with a single, progressive artistic and political vision. The exhibition was filled with pavilions representing non-Russian ethnicities, remixing vernacular forms and intricate motifs, and manipulating traditional elements in order to express an eclectic past and a more cohesive, unified future (Castillo, Peoples at an Exhibition, 1997). Thus, the Soviet practice of standardizing difference was codified and later used as a strategy in the design of Soviet palaces.

At first glace, Soviet palaces may seem flamboyant or extravagant. Palaces often utilized long-span structures to create dramatic, expansive interiors as these structures were built to handle large numbers of people for communal activities. Embedded in this combination of exuberance and efficiency was the class consciousness of the Stalinist era where buildings should serve and elevate

the general population as a reflection of the socialist state. One example of this structural intelligence and programmatic efficiency is the Wedding Palace in Kyiv, Ukraine (officially known today as the Kyiv Central Registry Office or Central Palace of Marriages). Completed in 1982 as the city's premier wedding destination, the building makes use of its triangular plan with a grand entrance hall on one corner and two wedding halls in the opposite corners, creating two mirrored halls for simultaneous services. Other than their color schemes (one blue and red, one green), both halls are decorated identically with long sheer curtains, stiff wooden chairs, and highly decorative chandeliers. The sweeping roof form in the entrance and in the wedding halls creates an atmosphere of drama and flair. The roof structure opens toward the entrance, compresses in the central circulation spaces, and releases again at the two mirrored wedding alters. Not only is this building exemplarily of public palaces' formal and programmatic relationships, as seen today it is also emblematic of trends in post-Soviet urban development. What was once undoubtedly, a grand building from the exterior, is now dwarfed between two high-rise towers and an adjacent McDonald's, perhaps a fitting example of Kyiv's post-socialist capitalistic tendencies. Despite its current urban condition, the palace is not only in use today as a wedding venue, it is thriving. On any day of the week multiple weddings occur simultaneously, as guests of various events glide seamlessly through the many ornate and gilded vestibules, lobbies, and waiting areas.

Figure 1. Wedding Palace, Kyiv, Ukraine. Interior hall of one wedding chapel. (Photograph by author, 2018)

Often Soviet palaces are subtler in their exuberance, cloaking their grand gesture behind modest, non-descript facades. One such example is the Tigran Petrosian Chess House in Yerevan, Armenia (ironically, another triangular building) which marries functionality and volumetric experimentation behind a sculptural facade. In dramatic fashion, the visitor to the Chess House passes through the entrance and directly onto a mezzanine overlooking the main chess hall. Dozens of chessboard tables organize the hall below; the viewer is in perfect position to observe the games from above. The spectator is instantly part of the games, without ever disturbing the players—a sectional move which makes the building one of the best places in the world to watch a game of chess. In the case of the Chess House or the Kyiv Wedding Palace, their hyper-attentiveness to the alignment of form and program have created enduring buildings which thrive as their programmatic activities remain popular.

Figure 2. Tigran Petrosian Chess House, Yerevan, Armenia. View from entrance hall mezzanine toward chess hall. (Photograph by author, 2018)

The Tbilisi Archeology Museum exemplifies Georgia's more expressive, figural and sculptural tendencies. The museum takes a dramatic stance perched on a hill overlooking the city. The building's posture is pronounced, stocky, and bulging. Its formal presence overshadows the sculptural relief adorning the entrance. The oversized stairs leading to the front door challenge the viewer to experience the building beyond the outwardly focused expression and speculate on the interior spaces. Inside, the building reveals the exterior segmentation actually disguises an expansive, shallow-domed space. Not untypical of some Soviet-era public buildings, the museum was never fully completed due to financial strains, and thus, is now in private ownership. Georgia has struggled publically in recent years to deal with their Soviet legacy as political leaders in the country have often used architecture to directly symbolize their aspirations for the independent nation. At best, the country has gained notoriety for several contemporary architectural works by internationally-acclaimed European architects, and at its worst, the campaign has resulted in the dilapidation, privatization, or ruination of Soviet architectural gems.

Figure 3. Archaeology Musem, Tbilisi, Georgia. View from exterior pathway toward museum entrance. (Photograph by author, 2018)

Political and economic shifts in the past decade, particularly with the Russo-Georgian war in 2008 and the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity and subsequent Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014, have strengthened nationalistic tendencies in the region. The is no cultural capital at the moment for "Russian" architecture. In fact, city tourism and local historians are painstakingly documenting and promoting urban histories which are pre-Soviet. The local frustration with an international equation between local history and Soviet history is palpable. The city of Lviv, for example, has been awarded a UNESCO designation for its historic city center (dating from the 5th to the 17th centuries) while significant examples of Soviet modernism such as the Striyskyi Bus Terminal (1980), have been left to decay on the outskirts of the city.

Will Soviet palaces become regional again? In the intervening years, Soviet palaces have become known as just that—*Soviet*. Yet, as has been described, they always included regional motifs and ornamentation, even if ornamentation after the Stalinist period became kitsch, colonialist (Castillo, Soviet Orientalism: Socialist Realism and Built Tradition, 1997) or possibly a form of silent protest against the colonization of the communist project (Czaplicka, 2005, p. 173). It seems less important today to debate the authenticity of regionalism in Soviet architecture than to embrace its inherent possibilities. Motifs which could be seen as infantilizing in their non-Russian-ness, can now be recast through a nationalist or regional lens. Whether accurate or not, reclaiming palaces as regional could preserve the buildings for the next generation. At some point, it becomes irrelevant if these buildings are "Ukrainian" or "Armenian" or "Georgian." What will preserve them as lasting pieces of heritage is whether or not contemporary architects can craft a convincing narrative around them. A rebranding exercise might allow the buildings to absorb new narratives and gain public admiration.

International success

Soviet modernism has become an increasingly popular topic for architectural consumption in the past few years. Recently published books such as *CCCP: Cosmic Communist Constructions Photographed*, *Soviet Bus Stops*, and *Decommunized: Ukrainian Soviet Mosaics* have tapped into a market for a particular type of Soviet "ruin porn." In the age of recirculating images, media platforms—most prolifically Instagram—have given Soviet modernism a new life and a new audience. Given the age of many of its devoted followers it may be safe to say that this obsession is one of an imagined collective past.

In addition to the informal success of online collections of images of Soviet modernism, other similar collections are gaining notoriety to a Western audience. The Museum of Modern Art in New York is currently exhibiting works which share a striking formal similarity to late Soviet architecture in the exhibition *Toward a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948–1980*. Ironically, in both instances buildings designed to spread propaganda at the time, are just now reaching an international audience surprisingly willing to soak up the images and their embedded ideas. The strong forms emboding a pre-language aesthetic and the ubiquitous use of concrete easily links Soviet and Yugoslavian works. Viewers delight in the pure spectacle of the gothic scale and geometric purity. As we witness a swing towards nationalism in Europe and the extreme political polarization in America, these images may give us a glimpse into a previous world not necessarily filled with harmony or prosperity, but at least one of unification.

Why are images of Soviet architecture so popular in the West, particularly in America? There are several reasons why these images carry so much cultural currency at present. The first comes from the direct formal attributes of the designs. The immediacy of their forms come through an austerity regime of geometry, strong character independent of ornamentation. These characteristics related to a contemporary moment when architecture has returned to an obsession with fragments, primitives, and crude shapes. (Meredith, 2017) The second is the continued fascination and "othering" in their international image,

enhancing the strong aesthetic fetishization of post-industrial landscapes. The intense greyness of the images, the monochromatic buildings and relentless use of concrete simply reinforces preconceived stereotypes about Eastern European cities as bland places devoid of color. (Of course, a visit to any of these sites would prove quite the opposite.) In all of these instances, photography is used as the primary means of communication; shockingly absent are the extraordinary plans, sections or other architectural drawings which would reveal to an architectural audience the underlying formation of the works. This use of medium might suggest that the audience for this architecture may not be the architect at all, but instead the millennial eye.

In their new form as "ruin porn" these images do not require the viewer to engage critically with the building as a site of continual habitation or functioning entity. Instead, buildings are typically presented as unoccupied ruins, even when most are fully-functioning as university buildings, performance halls, or bustling marketplaces. The viewer of contemporary images of Soviet palaces can engage with the image as a relic, a seemingly objective view of a defunct political regime tinged with nostalgia, and even possibly, envy. These images serve as a cautionary tale and an inspirational past. The inherent geographical remoteness of the site and the immediacy of the image work to blur the connection between time and space. Most importantly, they allow the viewer to momentarily imagine alternative scenarios to our contemporary politics. We want to judge their symbolism *and* admire their form. However, the moralistic outlook of the contemporary viewer fails on both accounts. What the photos fail to show is that these buildings endure; they survive, die, adapt, expand, grow, fall down—they are in formation.

Rebranding Regionalism

In conclusion, this paper makes little claims on the authenticity of regionalism in Soviet palaces. In fact, the phenomenon of faux regionalism found in Soviet architecture created something no one anticipated—a new type of architectural ensemble. Soviet palaces as a series of architectural works created buildings

linked by their similarities and use of programmatic expression, yet regionally different enough to be considered reflections of the diversity of the Soviet republics.

If we release issues of regionalism from any moral or ethical imperatives, we can find in Soviet palaces a series of buildings truly able to adapt to shifting political tides. It can be tempting to assign palaces authenticity based on ornamental details, but the arbitrary act of assigning authenticity will not result in the political or cultural shift needed to save the buildings from demolishment. The challenge now is to harness the potential of standardizing the unique and recast Soviet palaces as regional works in independent nations. This strategy of preservation (or act of appropriation) may find the success within post-Soviet countries that the image culture of the West found in highlighting their Sovietness. If architects spend less time looking at buildings as archaeologists and more time understanding their contemporary consumption, Soviet palaces may still be around to usher in the cultural and social life of the next generation.

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THE JUNTA DE COLONIZAÇÃO INTERNA AND THE SHAPING OF THE ESTADO NOVO'S PEASANTRY:
Newness and stagnation of the rural society

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Abstract

Considerations on the Portuguese architecture during the New State are usually set apart cultural, societal and economic developments. Appreciating, in particular, the modifications of the constructive techniques, Portuguese architectural historians place the Estado Novo architecture within the 'Modern Movement' or Modernism. However, Modernism, far beyond a mere aesthetic phenomenon, has been conceptualise - either by philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists or historians – as a radical response to the abrupt economic and societal challenges brought by the modernity, such as the working class proletarisation, laicisation of the society, transport revolution, and so forth. Having said that, this paper aims to scrutinise the societal model reproduced by the Junta de Colonização Interna, one of the Estado Novo institutions in charge of studying and shaping the Portuguese rural landscape therefore materialising the regime's political views. The aim is to discuss its modernist character. Is it the case that the Estado Novo institution has ever aimed the creation of a new way of living plainly adjusted to modernity or did it reproduced the conservative, traditionalist and catholic values, with all its the rigid stratification they advocate? To enlighten this question, sketches, internal reports and other documents of the Junta de Colonização Interna will be explored through the lens of the allegedly dialogue between tradition and modernity that others identified in relation to architecture and urban planning discourses of the Estado Novo regime thus contributing to the debate on the regime's nature.

Keywords: Salazarism, Fascism Modernism.

1 – The ideology conveyed by the Portuguese Inner Colonisation plans

In this paper I am specifically interested in exploring the ways Portuguese inner colonisation somehow mirrors the New State's ideology. The New State [Estado Novo] was the dictatorship which ruled the country since 1933 until 1974 and Inner Colonisation was implemented by the Board of Inner Colonisation [Junta de Colonização Interna, JCI], an organism created in 1937.

Considerations on Portuguese architecture during the New State usually set apart cultural, societal and economic developments. But a building has to be studied

more broadly than through its planning and initial design. Such scrutiny must encompass material legacies, policies, and social practices. All these things considered, and a sense of its meaning, including its ideological expression can be successfully carried on.

With this complexity in mind, I will analyse the theme of the Portuguese inner colonisation.

2 – The New State societal model

Some discourses of Salazar on the society that the New State intend to create are self-explanatory. According to the chief of government, small independent houses would prompt silence, tranquillity and love, the sense of ownership, therefore the sense of family would be enhanced (Salazar, 2003 [1938]. Salazar considered misery as "a secrecy of progress, of civilization". According to him, it was not in the agrarian environment, "where life [was] simple and without ambition, that misery becomes distressing, dramatic". It was a tragedy that rather developed in the cities, in the great capitals, "all the more insensitive and harsher, the more civilized", he claimed (Salazar, 2003 [1938]). For him it was "mechanization, the automatism of progress" that turned men into machines, "isolates him brutally by replacing his gestures and affective impulses with complicated and cold cogs" (Salazar, 2003 [1938]).

His aim was not to turn Portugal in a rich country. He said once that he did not wish to feed "the poor with illusions", but rather to preserve "the simplicity of life, the purity of customs, the sweetness of feelings, the balance of social relations, this familial atmosphere, modest but the noble of Portuguese life." According to Salazar, these achievements would awake the Portuguese traditions and enable the country social peace (Salazar,1945).

3 – What placed inner colonisation into the political agenda?

Those statements do not mean the political elites and technicians involved in the Junta de Colonização Interna were trying to solve problems resulting from Portuguese industrialisation – which was rather incipient at the time –, but rather to establish a strategy to prevent its future rising and, above all, to hamperthe rural exodus that was growing due to the lack of work in rural areas. This would demand guaranteeing the minimal conditions for the farmers to keep living in the countryside. Only in that sense the improvement of living conditions was among the state's objectives. To attract industrial proletariat to rural areas was never an objective.

4 – The Portuguese "new farmer"

Salazarism considered family as the centre of all social organisation, the primary guarantee of social order. Therefore, the ways it conceived the program of inner colonisation should shed light on the concept of family as the regime imagined it.

Not all farmers were considered apt to get the agricultural units that would be distributed by the Board. According to 1938 law, those who deserve to receive agrarian units form the state would have to match the the following requirements: to be Portuguese, less than 45 years and a non-alcoholic, to be robust, healthy and serious. The settler should also be prepared to be a hard worker and could neither a rowdy person nor communist. He must be also devoted to the New State constitution and integrated in the regime's social order. Previous five years practice in agriculture was required unless the farmer possessed a certificate from an agriculture school. In 1948, new law lowered the appropriate age to 30 years old and additional requirements were added. The settler should be male, head of the family and someone with guarantees in terms of moral probity. Preferentially, the good settler should also be someone with at least rudimentary notions of the Catholic Church Social Doctrine.[1]

[1] *I Curso de Monitores de Mecanização Agrícola, Relatório*, 1963-1964. Lisbon: Junta de Colonização Interna, 1964.

5 – New houses for the new settlers

How were the ideal house for the settler and his - idealised - family? In terms of building policy, the question is if the rural houses to host the settlers in the new colonies were somehow proposing a modern way of living, something more adequate to the societal progress of the humanity, and thus suitable capable of boosting a new kind of Portuguese man, a modern rural man.

In ideological terms, the regime saw the house within a plot as a central aspect in process of cementing familiar relationships and therefore, the house would work as an instrument to keep man far from politics and its pernicious actions and conspiracies. This idea is illustrated by a statement of an agronomist working for the Ministry of Agriculture at the time. Mário Botelho de Macedo published a guide explaining how rural houses should be. In this publication he would state:

"If the house plays such a significant role in the life of any man, in the case of the peasant, his influence is even more pronounced, because he does not have the coffee shop, the club or the cinema to spare his free time. After finishing his work, he only has the house, his home is the only thing left to attract him" (Macedo, 1942).

But was the house so attractive as it was meant to be?

In the 1930s, another agronomist José Pereira Caldas that, unlike the former, worked to the after a travelling worked from JCI mission to study inner colonisation in Europe reported that, the houses promoted by Suisse inner colonisation programme were built with the certain commodities: hot water, electricity, and bathroom. However, rarely were these assets mentioned in the plans of JCI and even more rare were its effective design and construction in the settlers' houses.

It is true that JCI thought that rural housing should have, at least, a kitchen – functioning also as a dining and a living-room –, a room for the parents, one for the boys, another for the daughters, and a toilet (Macedo, 1942). But these were almost the single advancements one can find.

Indeed, JCI annual reports offers no significant innovations to be introduced in the rural housing. JCI planned for a "house with as few divisions as possible"[2]; no architects were involved in the technical decision-making process,[3] the department was exclusively ruled by agronomists, and only from 1948 onwards they were included in the permanent staff of the Board.

In the end, Portuguese inner colonisation plans didn't even include piped water at least until 1945. More or less the same happened with the electricity and its supply. Even afterwards only 4 out of the 7 colonies were built with such infrastructure. Even within those more progressive colonies, one wonders what real impact these infrastructures have had in the process of creating modern and suitable homes for agricultural families… Health care assistance and free education also seem not to have been a great success.

No doubt that agricultural plots were thought to be managed in a more professionalised and progressist way but still…The general idea one gets is that the Board was not very successful in the implementation of its policies.

Indeed, of the 1533 agricultural units planned in the early days of JCI, each one including land, housing and agriculture infrastructures, only 471 (31%) were built, and several of them were never occupied. This in a country that had two and a half million households in 1960. The numbers of households seem quite irrelevant and even more so if one thinks of the extensive works of the Italian or the Spanish inner colonisation.

6 – Revolution or evolution

Returning to my main question, was JCI putting into practice a revolutionary social project, something that would be in line with a social and cultural form of modernism in terms of proposing an alternative to the society and the culture inherited from the vicious modernity?

[2] "Report [of the Corporatist Chamber]", p. 111.
[3] See the Decreto-Lei n. 27.207, November, 1936.

The Portuguese roots of an idea of inner colonisation date back to the end of the 19th Century and some efforts were in fact carried out during the 1st Republic to launch this kind of initiative.[4] For instance, the Colony Milagres (1925) was a creation of the First Portuguese Republic (1910-1926), the demo-liberal regime that preceded Salazar's Estado Novo (1932-1974) even if there is no doubt that it was the Estado Novo that designed a more consistent policy of inner colonization with the creation of an organism fully dedicated to the study and implementation of the colonies plans, design plans, and development management. But the question is: in what way did it impact peasantry lives?

7 – The transitory nature of the Junta de Colonização Interna

At this time of my research, I argue that the inner colonisation was never a priority for the dictatorial regime. Firstly, because these services would always have transitional nature. In 1938, some of the regime's hierarchs would claim:

"The recognition of the vacant lands is done. Some will be wooded, others will serve as peoples' common land and others can and should be availed for colonisation. How many thousands of hectares? Not as many as it seems, if one wants to make a lasting contribution. It will not solve the problem that has been brought by the increase of the population. However, [...] we have to take advantage of what remains and guide the population flow to the colonies with more intense impetus, developing the settlers' general conditions of life. And why a Board? They last as long as they there is an advantage in maintaining them."[5]

Another quotation taken from a decree-law of 1962 goes along in the same line: "The inventory of the common land of the Continent, which the Junta de Colonização Interna carried out, revealed how much the illusion was that there was still in Portugal appreciable areas susceptible of agricultural exploitation. The

[4] Decrees n. 4.812, de 1918, e nº 7.127, de 1920.
[5] "Report [of the Corporatist Chamber] on two internal colonisation projects", *Diários da Assembleia Nacional* (Minutes of the National Assembly), n. 192, 29 October 1938.

reduced possibilities of colonisation, then carefully defined, are now entirely exhausted."[6]

Furthermore, from 1932 to 1943, there was an energic Public Works minister – Duarte Pacheco – that took upon himself the responsibility of conducting all the meaningful buildings and infrastructures plans the regime had considered crucial for the country's development. Why didn't he bring inner colonisation – at least housing and social buildings – under his ministry responsibility or even create a specific organism to deal with it exactly as he had done within other contexts from justice to education spheres, from public banking to post offices. The inexistence of an Agriculture Ministry from 1940 onwards circumstance that had put JCI under the authority of the Ministry of Economy is another situation can rise the doubt of how significant the inner colonisation was for the regime.

8 – The danger of over simplistic arguments: fascist v. non-fascist architecture

As regards the external influences that would have allegedly been absorbed by the Board and its realisations, it is worth to mention some facts described by two technicians from JCI. In 1937, the agronomist José Luís Calheiros e Meneses (1906-?) and José Pereira Caldas (1895-1958), were sent to the International Institute of Agriculture – the predecessor of FAO, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations – that at that time was located in Rome. This journey gave origin to two reports. One on the Bonifica Integral in Italy, that I could not find so far, and a second one with which we have learned that after that visiting Italy, the initial plan was going directly to Czechoslovak to visit a colonization experience that the international institution had recommended. Notwithstanding, the Portuguese considered that, in face of the available information, Czechoslovak, at the time ruled by a parliamentary republic, was not a good example to follow because the agrarian reform carried out in that country was no more than a "coup d'etat against latifundia" grounded in demagogy rather

[6] Decree-Law n. 44720, 23 November 1962.

than in economic realities, and therefore far from the Portuguese concerns (Meneses and Caldas, 1937).

Alternatively, the agronomist chose to go to Switzerland. According to the them, Suisse inner colonisation was more suitable to the Portuguese case. On the one hand, it aimed the improvement of crops conditions and the re-parcelling of the land. On the other hand, and more importantly, it also intended to provide a solution for the growing unemployment and the progressive emptiness of the countryside due to the country's industrialization. And, last but not the least, Suisse was following the path of economic autarchy. That is to say, Suisse inner colonisation demonstrated economic but also social concerns and, in that sense, it matched entirely with the "national movement for social promotion of the Portuguese countryside" that was considered as the main aim of the works of JCI (Meneses and Caldas, 1937).

These considerations illustrate that influences from other countries other than the fascist ones. But more research and thought should be given to the topic, which I intend to further explore in the following months.

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WHITE CUBISM RELOADED.
The reinterpretation of Libyan Vernacular Architecture as the Answer to how to Build in the Colony.[1]

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Abstract

Which style for Libya, Italian colony during Fascism? The paper explores the theoretical debate on the colonial style, pointing out the diverse theoretical positions and the gap with the realisations in the colony at the beginning of the colonisation. From the mid of the 1930s the architecture in the colony take a particular direction and follow a certain style, which – beyond any Moorish or Arabisances – seem to consciously re-elaborate vernacular architecture. The concept of "cubism" is than explained, as probably the most interesting contribution to the architecture in the colony.

Keywords: Colonial Architecture, Mediterraneity, Libya, Fascism, New Town, Rationalism

Which style was used to build in Libya during the colonial time? The answer to this question is not univocal, and involves a wider discussion about modernity and its relation to Fascism in the Italian colony. Nevertheless, the historical theoretical debate on how to build in the colony offers a paradigmatic overview of the uncertainties surrounding the meanings of concepts such as "Fascist architecture", "colonial architecture" and "modernity", both in relation to the architecture in Italy and in Libya.

This paper aims at proposing an overall view of the contemporary theoretical debate on the search for an appropriate style for the colony. The various positions

[1] This article is a revised and enriched version of a previously published article Capresi, V. (2011-2012). Il *razionalismo libico*. Reminiscenze e influssi nell'architettura coloniale'. In F. Canali, V. Galati (Eds.), *Bollettino della Società di studi Fiorentini "Firenze, Modernizzazione e Italianità".* n.20-21 (pp.287-295). Firenze: emmebi.

are discussed here, illustrating the panorama of possibilities which were considered valuable to realise a "proper style" in the colony.

The conclusion remains open, there is no univocal theoretical understanding of how to build in Libya. Still, the realisations show a clear unanimity and a stylistic homogeneity, particularly in those buildings not directly related to state institutions, which show how in the praxis architects managed to find a common formal approach to the practical requirements.

In this paper I argue that through the observation of vernacular architecture Italian architects developed a style which, even if apparently inspired only by the forms of Libyan constructions, through a reuse of these forms, led to the appropriation of many functional and technical solutions. This reloading of vernacular "cubism" was probably the most original contribution to architecture in the colony.

The narration needs to start in Tripoli, the city where it is easiest to follow the various changes in architecture style because it was the most documented during the occupation and, as the capital, provided a reference point for contemporary criticism to measure the state of the art of town planning and architecture praxis in the colony. Taking Tripoli as a paradigmatic example of the situation in Libya, it can be seen that the discussion on how to build in the colony started at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, when several architects and intellectuals published articles relating to colonial architecture in the main Italian architecture magazines. This period marked a turning point for the visibility of the colony in the motherland: Mussolini's trip to Tripoli in April 1927 aimed at drawing attention to the colony in order to foster private capital investment. From the late 1920s several fairs were also held in Tripoli, making it comparable to other regional Italian capitals.[2]

The first general urban development plan for Tripoli was designed by Luigi Luiggi in 1912, immediately after the beginning of the colonisation process. This plan is considered by scholars to be a mature interpretation of the urban situation, and a

[2] Such as the first Colonial Agrarian Congress in 1926; and the first Tripoli Trade Fair in 1927.

modern answer to how to build the main city of the colony.[3] The plan in fact took inspiration from the existing Ottoman infrastructures, enforcing existing pathways and development lines.[4] The implementation of the plan through the construction of its most prominent buildings was begun after the reconquest of Libya at the end of the First World War, when the Governor's Palace, the Cathedral, the Miramare Theatre, the Municipal Hotel and the Banca d'Italia headquarters were built. The styles of those constructions reflected a certain romanticism, which alternated neo-Romanesque realisations, neo-Islamic influences and neo-Moorish buildings against which the rationalist architect Carlo Enrico Rava took a clear position in 1931 in *Domus*, one of the most important rationalist magazines:

> One must admit that the problem of contemporary colonial architecture is one of the many aspects of the general problem of architectural modernity, and that, consequently, it has the right, as much as any other, to be taken into consideration from the point of view of rationalism.

and further on:

> In Libya there has never been any trace of that Moorish architecture, which instead established itself in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Arab Spain. Unfortunately many still confuse "colonial" with "Moorish", and it can never be repeated enough that in Libya there is no other Moorish except that, false and monstrous beyond description, which distinguishes many buildings raised by us, which oscillate between an Orient from the "Pavilion of Wonders" and a certain "Alhambra" style that was typical of the bath-structures of 40 years ago. (Rava, 1931, p.39 and p.89)

[3] Luigi Luiggi was the Superior Inspector of the Civil Corps of Engineers. For the plan see: Capresi, V. (2012). Architectural Transfer, Italian Colonial Architecture in Libya: 'Libyan Rationalism' and the Concept of 'Mediterraneity', 1926-1942. In F. Demissie (Ed.), *Colonial Architecture and Urbanism in Africa*, (pp.41-43). In Gresleri, G., et al. (2008). *Architettura italiana d'oltremare: atlante iconografico.* Bologna: Bononia University Press are several surveys and master plans for Tripoli, also that elaborated by A. Alpago- Novello, O. Cabiati, G. Ferrazza. In general the book offers a vast repository of pictures of Tripoli, p.149-282.

[4] Zeynep Celik demonstrated how Ottoman viability crucially shaped the Italian plan, which basically reinforced the pre-existing viability. Çelik, Z. (2008). *Empire, Architecture, and the City: French-Ottoman Encounters, 1830-1914*. Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press.

It is obviously not possible to define a clear chronological turning point, but the beginning of the 1930s marked a renewed theoretical interest in colonial architecture: in this period the first studies and articles about how to build contemporary in the colony appeared. On the side of the rationalists, Carlo Enrico Rava published in *Domus* in 1931 two articles on modern colonial architecture. Luigi Piccinato wrote the *Colonial Building* entry for the Italian Encyclopedia in 1931, and in 1933 he proposed a modern prototype of a colonial home at the V *Triennale di Milano*. Also in 1933, *Rassegna di Architettura*, a more conventional magazine, began to give space to articles about new buildings in the colony. On the other hand, in Libya buildings in Moorish, Oriental and Neo-Romanic styles were built, and the gap between the realisations and the first steps of the theoretical debate widened.

The first statement issued by a state body concerning the need to establish an Italian-Libyan style is expressed in the call for the competition for the *Piazza della Cattedrale* in Tripoli. In the call for the second competition (the first concluded without winners) announced by the Municipality of Tripoli in July 1930, we read:

> [...] the architectural projects [...] should be characterised by the appropriateness of a large city and the spirit of modern art. They should not only respond to the environmental characteristics but also to the spirit of the current historical era and tangible signs of Italian domination. It is necessary for applicants to research with a sense of modernity those forms that are most effective in creating an "Italian Colonial Architecture", that should arise from the successful fusion of local architectural features with those of our artistic tradition.[5]

[5] "[…] i progetti architettonici […] dovranno essere improntati al decoro di una grande città ed allo spirito dell'arte moderna e rispondere oltre che alle caratteristiche edilizie ambientali a quelle che debbono esserle impresse dallo spirito dell'era Storica attuale e dal segno tangibile della dominazione italiana. Fa d'uopo ai concorrenti ricercare con senso di modernità quelle forme che valgano più efficacemente a creare una "Architettura Coloniale Italiana" che dovrebbe nascere dalla felice fusione dei caratteri architettonici locali con quelli della nostra tradizione artistica", Archivio Centrale dello Stato ACS - Ministero dell'Africa Italiana MAI, b.95, Direzione Generale Affari Civili, fascicolo 5, Concorso Piazza della Cattedrale.

In addition to the requirement for decorum and modernity, the key theme pointed out in the call is the need to search for an "Italian Colonial Architecture", intended as a compromise between the concept of setting - "formal copying of local architectural features" - and the reuse of architectural forms from the Italian tradition. What the regime meant by modernity or "our artistic tradition" is not clear from the text. It is important to underline that this was the first time an official body had expressed the need for a new Italian colonial architecture, described as a synthesis of a certain local colour tempered and guided by a not clearly defined Italian tradition.

An alternative to the Moorish / picturesque style is not formulated, but from the early 1930s the architecture to be built in Libya was clearly required to respond both to the setting and to the political agenda of the regime.

How to build colonial?

The theoretical debate on colonial architecture began, as previously mentioned, with the articles published by Rava in *Domus* in 1931, dedicated to modern colonial architecture. As an alternative to the "Moorish" style, Rava proposed an architecture inspired by the characteristics of Libyan architecture. This was described as having signs of Roman influence, of influences almost cubistic, mixed with Mediterranean characteristics. Ultimately, building colonial meant for Rava in 1931 paying attention to the various influences of Libyan forms, knowing how to grasp and reinterpret them, and introducing the architect's skills in the process.

Rava was still against the Moorish style in 1937, when in his intervention in the chapter dedicated to colonial architecture at the first National Congress of Urban Planning affirmed the need to interpret the requirements of building in the colony:

> Architects need to understand the "problem" of building in a colony. It is an issue of Italianness, and, at the same time, of environment, actuality and culture, dignity and power: colonial architecture in fact must represent imperial affirmation, but also make material the research of a setting, the

> fusion of an elaborate modernity with an acute and careful understanding of the needs of climate, latitude, colour.

And:

> The task is therefore largely new, original; it is a matter of creating, on the basis of colonial needs, an Italian and modern architecture, and not being inspired by foreign examples.[6]

It is interesting that, in addition to the necessity of affirming a vague *Italianness* (Italianità, intended as "Imperial affirmation"), Rava spoke of "colonial needs", inviting architects to take into account the practical issues dictated by the local climate, latitude and local colour.

The first "Manifesto of Colonial Architecture" was written in 1936 by Giovanni Pellegrini, a Milanese architect active in Tripoli from the early 1930s. Pellegrini's text cannot be considered a canonical manifesto, in the sense of a universal theoretical programmatic text. His is rather a set of practical rules to be followed. In the text are illustrated precise solutions which should be followed in order to build in the colony, and which are based on the observation of vernacular architecture:

> The walls are free of openings, but when there are some they are very small, and in this case they are protected by barriers, or, if bigger, they are protected by fences, grates, musciarabie [...] The entrance is enhanced by height and sober decoration [...]. (Pellegrini, 1936, p.350)

Like Rava, Pellegrini invited a precise observation of the vernacular Libyan architecture, because it was considered to contain effective responses to the particular climatic situation.

[6] Rava, C.E. (1937). Alcuni appunti di urbanistica coloniale. In *Atti del primo congresso nazionale di urbanistica*, Roma 5-7 Aprile, vol. I, p.90-92. Fuller, M. (1994-95). Carlo Enrico Rava. The radical first formulations of colonial rationalism. In *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre | Environmental Design: European Houses in the Islamic Countries*, Rome: Dell'oca Editori (pp.150-59).

> All the solutions that the practice of indigenous constructions prove to be effective (houses with central courtyards, closed walls, narrow streets) will have to be resolutely used, merging them with what modern technology teaches us.

And, at the end of the manifesto:

> Let us summarise what from the vernacular architecture must be applied in modern architecture. Practical solutions for protection against climatic factors: a) for the city: streets shaded by porticos and vegetation [...] b) For the home: inner courtyards with loggias, curtains, hanging gardens [...]. The aesthetic values resulting from the use of these are: a) for the city: a plastic configuration, non-metallic cubist effect of masses and polychrome. b) for the house: exaltation of the doorway, hiding of the interior of the house, sense of austerity of family life, terraces with loggias on the façade and above the ceilings as a double roof.[7]

Ultimately, to build in Libya, it was necessary to take inspiration from the architectural forms in the colony, seizing and reworking the solutions spontaneously adopted by the vernacular architecture, which was recognised to have the merit of having solved most of the problems of adaptation – as a result of successive continuous adjustments to climatic, distributive and social needs.

The reuse of formal solutions in fact implied the reuse of experience acquired over time by the local population.

Vernacular Cubism (*Is this Modern?*)

To illustrate his Manifesto on colonial architecture, Giovanni Pellegrini published a rich photographic apparatus, in which he used the term *cubism* to describe the organisation of volumes of Libyan vernacular architecture. He broke down the

[7] Pellegrini, G. (1036). Manifesto dell'architettura coloniale. In *Rassegna di Architettura*, 8, p.349-350. About the reaction on the manifesto by Alpago Novello see: D'Amia, G. (2011). L'Urbanistica coloniale di Giovanni Pellegrini e la pianificazione die villaggi libici. In *Territorio. Rivista del Dipartimento di Architettura e Pianificazione del Politecnico di Milano*, n.57, June (pp.125-135).

term into: *elementary cubism*, to describe a house in Tripoli; *classic cubism,* to describe the base of a minaret, suggesting the transition from a squared section into a cylinder; and finally, and not without irony, *intransigent cubism,* to describe the apparently disordered volumes of the old city of Tripoli. The concept of cubism was used as a stylistically-formal characteristic linked to the exterior appearance of the buildings.[8]

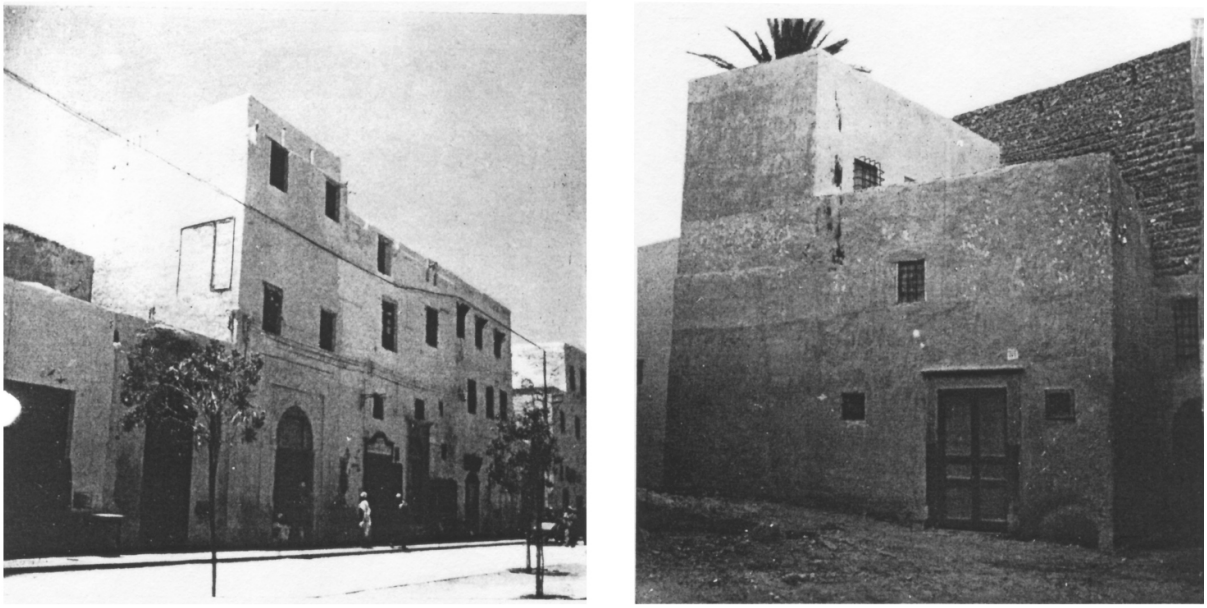

Figure 1. Two of the four pictures illustrating the article by Pellegrini. Original caption left: "Palazzo sul lungomare di Tripoli; proporzioni fortemente cubiche": Palace on the seafront in Tripoli; proportions highly cubic. Right "Casetta privata nella Hara di Tripoli; completa e indipendente. Esempio di cubismo elementare. All'interno il piccolo patio.": Little private house in the Hara in Tripoli; complete and independent. Example of elementary cubism. Inside a little patio. (*Rassegna*, 8, 1936, p.360)

This *cubism* could be recognised in the architecture of the new rural centres as well as in constructions in the main cities, as a combination of geometrically elementary volumes, assembled to achieve a compositional equilibrium that is not necessarily symmetrical or regulated by exact geometries, but rather governed by aesthetic factors that do not exclude dramatic contrasts, such as deep shadows

[8] In *Rassegna*, 8, 1936, the captions of pictures 1, 2 and 3 p.360, and 1 and 4 p.361. Most of the pictures of Tripoli are by the architect himself.

opposing large empty walls, or the monotonous repetition of single elements - a window, an arch, a pillar.

This formal cubism was clearly recognisable in buildings constructed for entertainment purposes and in privately-commissioned villas where the spectacular component of power necessary for public buildings linked to the regime was not requested.

Di Fausto's buildings in Tripoli followed this compositional arrangement; they seemed to be designed with primary, basic forms directly borrowed from Tripoli's vernacular architecture. In the Hotel Uaddan, or Mehari, as well as in the San Francesco Church, in the cylinders of the towers, as well as in the conical or pyramidal roof, we can recognise the domes of the marabouts and mosques, or the minarets. The single volumes were separated and stripped of their initial role, and reassembled following the goal of an aesthetically balanced composition.

Figure 2. Hotel Uaddan in Tripoli, Florestano di Fausto (1934-35). An example of cubism? (Postcard)

Figure 3. Hotel Uaddan in 2009, after a neo-moorish restoration: wooden musharabias and pergolas have been added. (Picture by the author, 2009)

In the villas he built in the early 1930s in Tripoli, Pellegrini himself showed a particular sensitivity to the definition of a language that, while responding to the functional needs of private clients, was able to fit into the local architectural panorama.[9]

He created a certain cubism by stacking volumes, often grouped around a central core. The resulting facades were fringed towards the outside and caused effects of intense shadow and light, also highlighted by the frequent use of pergolas and canopies. There were no main axes or symmetries, and the apparent randomness of the openings was undoubtedly linked to the vernacular architecture. Similar treatment of volumes was also used by Pellegrini in his projects for rural centres, where cubism was produced by the use of arches, as single elements or as a

[9] Zard House, Salvi House and the entrance of Villa Burei repeat the idea of a central empty volume to define the distribution of the spaces. In *Rassegna*, 9, 1933, p.392-393 are several pictures of the buildings by Pellegrini in Tripoli; also *Rassegna*, XIV-XV, 1936 "Nuove costruzioni a Tripoli. Arch. Giovanni Pellegrini", 6-10. See also: D'Amia, G. (2008). The Work of Giovanni Pellegrini in Libya. In E. Godoli, B. Gravagnuolo, G. Gresleri (Eds.), *Presence of Italian Architects in Mediterranean Countries,* Firenze: m&m (pp.79–89).

sequence, the composition of overlapping geometries, and windows carved into compact blocks. The similarity with the forms of Libyan vernacular architecture was also reinforced by the use of white plaster, employed partly for practical reasons: no cut stones or bricks were available for load-bearing walls, and for rapidity of construction stones and mortar were usually used and these needed to be homogenised with a layer of plaster.

Figure 4. The rural centre Breviglieri, today al-Khadra, Tripolitania, architect U. di Segni (1938). (Picture by the author, 2009)

After the publication of the Manifesto the concept of cubism was not developed further on a theoretical level. From the mid-1930s, it was the concept of *Mediterranean architecture* which was predominantly used to stylistically resume construction in the colony. The concept of *Mediterraneity* was probably the most suitable term to describe a compromise to unify a certain simplicity of form (what Pellegrini would have called *cubism*) with the required Italianity, without risking shame for taking inspiration from Libyan vernacular architecture. As Mia Fuller

pointed out, Mediterraneity was the regime's solution to legitimise the formal transfer of Libyan vernacular architecture to colonial buildings.[10]

The whole theoretical discussion on how to build in the colony was never really concluded, and the debate on terms and adjectives continued during the entire occupation. Still, beyond any theoretical labels, architects seemed to agree on the necessity for building that fitted local climatic challenges, reflecting the forms and technical solutions adopted in Libya. For these reasons the architecture of the newly funded rural centres, as well as the private and minor buildings, materialised a certain functional style typical for the region, which originated in climatic and functional needs, and which was probably the most original contribution to the architecture produced in Libya.

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[10] Much has been written in past years about the idea of Mediterraneity. See Fuller, M. (2008). Mediterraneanism. French and Italian Architects' designs in 1930s North African Cities. In S.K. Jayyusi (Ed.), *The City in the Islamic World*, Vol 2, Boston: Brill (pp.978-992), and Fuller, M. (2007). *Moderns Abroad: Architecture, Cities and Italian Imperialism*. London: Routledge, in particular chapter 5. On the work of Florestano di Fausto and his idea of Mediterranean architecture, see Anderson, S.S. (2010). The Light and the Line Florestano Di Fausto and the Politics of Mediterraneità. In *California Italian Studies*, 1. For a general introduction on the concept being a politically correct reaction to subsume all requests by the regime in terms of Italianity, local colours, Romanity, see: Capresi (2012).

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MODERNITY FROM FAR EAST
Kazuo Shinohara's Fourth Space

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Abstract

Since, according to Kenneth Frampton, 'regional or national cultures must today, more than ever, be ultimately constituted as locally inflected manifestations of "world culture"', contemporary Japanese culture would be in this sense the 'world culture' par excellence, structured on two important cultural imports - the first occurred between the 6th and 7th centuries when from China was introduced the ideographic writing, Confucian model of society and along with them Indian Buddhism; and the second one, during the late 19th century, when for the rapid modernization of the country Western politics, science and technology were adopted. Having soon faced, and deeply questioned, the possibilities and problems of a global dimension of the thought, Japanese culture could be considered an original synthesis of universality and local identity where, although the many contradictions, the meeting with the stranger allowed to discover what 'not to be', rather than what to be. Starting from the other side of modernity, and tracing the different aspects of the adoption of Modern Movement in Japan, aim of this paper is to introduce the figure of the Japanese architect Kazuo Shinohara (1925-2006) who unveiled the plurality and richness of our spatial structures, the universal and the particular in which we are immersed, most of the time, without consciousness.

Keywords: Japanese architecture, Kazuo Shinohara, Space

Toward the end of the Meiji era,[1] a period in which Japan's rapid modernization process was scattering traditional forms of culture, and during the Taishō one,[2] when the adoption of all Western things was at its end, many Japanese intellectuals became increasingly critical about the applicability of Western frameworks to Japan and they started to feel the need to reformulate the values considered more traditional of Japan, especially in the arts. At that time, the long and thorny issue of 'unequal treaties' between Japan and the United States had been solved and Japan, already emerged victorious in two international conflicts, was trying to expand its influence further abroad by engaging in the same colonial struggle of Western nations. The growing aspiration to show the

[1] Japanese historical period corresponding to the reign of Emperor Mutsuhito, from 1868 to 1912, when Japan from an isolated feudal society changed into its modern form.
[2] The period from 1912 to 1926, corresponding to the reign of Emperor Yoshihito, son of Mutsuhito.

limits of a thought modelled on European civilization was translated into practice by Kakuzō Okakura,[3] the initiator of the first Japanese movement of art criticism. Interpreter of Ernest F. Fenollosa, teacher of Hegel's philosophy at the Tokyo Imperial University, Okakura had realized that things, made opaque by consuetude, were able to emanate a new light trough the alchemy of translation. Indeed, to introduce from a different prospective what was still perceived by foreigners just as an esoteric practice, in 1906, Okakura wrote in English his *The Book of Tea*, a modern celebration of the traditional Buddhist tea ceremony.

The attempt to revitalize an ancient culture while not renouncing in taking part to universal civilization was later shared also by writers, poets and philosophers, among them we remember Kitarō Nishida and Tetsurō Watsuji, two figures that distinguished themselves by their need to investigate the relationship between people and their land, the religious traditions, and the meaning of being Japanese and Asian. Although the reading of Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, had encouraged these philosophers to share the attempt to create universally valid concepts, the awareness of being in a place geographically and spiritually distant from the unity presented by western aesthetic led them to reflect on the originality of their culture through 'space', a concept able to synthetize the values considered more traditional of Japan (Marinucci, 2014). In 1919 Tetsurō Watsuji, publishing *Koji Junrei*, a book that collected the chronicle of his pilgrimage to the ancient capital Nara and its temples, celebrated Japan's international character by tracing back the cultural and ethnic origins of Japanese culture to Korea, China, India and even Greece. Because of its narrative quality of a journey into the history of a common space, over time, Watsuji's text became a reading considered essential for all people who wanted to immerse in a place that, for its social and religious dimension, was able to embrace the entire Japanese civilization (Nara, 2012). Consequence of a modern tension between East and West, Watsuji's concern was to promote the research on the forgotten Japanese culture, as we can read in a letter dated 1920 and addressed to his wife:

[3] In Japan the written and spoken order of names is family-name first and given-name second. Since in fields others than Japanese area studies the order are Westernized, I have chosen to follow this convention, therefore give-name precedes family-name.

> The ancient history of Japan is not as great as that of Greece or other European nations. But I feel very attached to the ancient history of Japan, particularly when I think of the fact that this history represents our ancestor's souls and it runs, unbeknown to us, in our blood. And the other thing that interests me is that studying about Japan is not unlike excavating buried objects. The reason I say this is that, in the past, world culture invariably referred to Western culture, but, recently, Eastern culture has been gaining momentum, so much so that it now stands opposite Western culture. […] insofar as the study of Japanese culture is concerned, no Westerner is a match for the Japanese. In this field, a Japanese can do world-class research. So the more Japan is spoken about, the more this research will have enduring meaning. (Watsuji, 2012, p. xiv)

The retrieval of Japanese identity was a matter on which also Kitarō Nishida deeply reflected on. In 1927, to introduce into the philosophical discussion the experience of Buddhist thought, considered capable of affirming the relevance in the world of the different Asian countries that it bounds, Nishida had written:

> It goes without saying that there are many things to be esteemed and learned in the brilliant development of Western culture, which regards form as being and formation as the good. However, at the basis of Asian culture, which has fostered our ancestors for over several thousand years, lies something that can be called seeing the form of the formless and hearing the sound of the soundless. Our minds are compelled to seek for this. I would like to give a philosophical foundation to this demand. (Nishida, 1990, p. x)

Figure 1. Bronze figure of the Supreme Goddess of Void. India, Andhra Pradesh, 18th-19th century. G. Berger private collection. Anthropomorphic throne formed as a square frame over a stepped base and surmounted by a shaped pediment representing hair with a pointed final, flanked by pierced ears, extended arms and legs. The frame denotes the formless transcendence of the deity.

With respect to architectural design, the yearning to elaborate a modern aesthetic of Japanese tradition was animated by a group of young architects who wished to resize the sense of inferiority of their compatriots, as well as their wicked tendency to imitate all Western models. The early 20th century, indeed, had been characterized by certain eclecticism in style, where Japanese and Western architectural components were intentionally combined into one building. The prototype of this new Japanese style was developed by the architect Kikutaro Shimoda when, in 1919, he received a formal request for a complete study for the rebuilding of the Tokyo Imperial Hotel. Returned to Japan from the United States, where he was a draftsman in Frank Lloyd Wright's office, in his preliminary design Shimoda proposed a Japanese style roof set on a low-profile masonry building. Surprisingly enough, following Shimoda's submission, in 1922, the project was assigned to Frank Lloyd Wright, who revisited Shimoda's design

plans by replacing the Japanese roof with a Prairie House roof style. Although Shimoda claimed that his design had been appropriated and plagiarised by Wright, his petition was ignored and Wright completed the construction of the Tokyo Imperial Hotel in 1923. In 1920, Shimoda proposed another project in which a Japanese roof style was assembled on top a neoclassical building for the Imperial Diet building competition. Despite Shimoda's proposal design was not successful, his various projects and petitions had drawn the attention of the government, as well of his professional colleagues and of the public in general, so much that between 1930 and 1932 the entry guidelines for the Tokyo Imperial Museum competition stipulated that submissions should have followed Shimoda's eclectic style, or what by the time became known as Imperial Crown Amalgamate Style (Isozaki, 2011).

As mentioned above, the decision to adopt as national symbol this architectural eclecticism raised the objection of a group of young architects who, soliciting participants to boycott the competition, wished to demonstrate the independence of Japanese architecture from the Western one, and thus to affirm that Japanese elements could be assumed as models for a local and more modern architectural composition. To reach the goal, in 1927, the architect Isaburō Ueno, recently back from his studies at the Wiener Werkbund, established in Kyoto the so-called Japan International Architectural Association[4] which, among other Japanese architects, included ex-officio International Style modernists like Bruno Taut, Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelsohn and Gerrit Rietveld (Isozaki, 2011). Taking advantage of the Japanese stay of Bruno Taut, refugee in Japan in 1933 to escape the racial persecutions, Ueno had the brilliant idea of bringing Taut to visit the Katsura Imperial Villa and the Ise Shrine, two main examples of traditional architecture in those years hardly accessible to the public. Comparing the cultural relevance of the Ise Shrine to the one of the Acropolis and declaring that the Katsura Imperial Villa could be interpreted as a masterpiece of functionalist architecture, sensing his role, Taut inaugurates a discourse on architecture capable of outlining the elements common to traditional Japanese architecture and to the modernist one, thus subverting the predominant eclecticism of the period (Isozaki, 2011). Although Taut's influence

[4] The Japanese name of the association is Nihon Intānashonaru Kenchikukai.

as spokesman, also the architect Hideto Kishida, professor at the Tokyo Imperial University, during the same period was encouraging to supress the temporal distances separating tradition from modern times by publishing, in 1929, his *Composition of the Past*,[5] a photographic essay in which traditional Japanese architecture was presented from a modernist gaze.[6] The same photos of ancient Japanese buildings were then used by Kishida to illustrate his *Japanese Architecture*, a volume part of a series of pamphlets published between 1936 and 1948 by the Board of Tourist Industry of the Japanese Government Railways to explain important aspects of Japanese culture and national life to visitors from overseas. As a matter of fact, before and after World War II the flow into Japan of foreign tourists was constant. They went to those topsy-turvy shores to seek the romance of the Far East, thrilled in expectation of dipping into the secrets of the Land of The Rising Sun (Kishida, 1936). To the eyes of Western architects, the compositional simplicity and the constructive clarity of Japanese architecture, with its opening towards the natural, the great transparency, the fluid circulation and the regularity of the partitions, appeared characteristics similar to those yearned by modernist architecture, and thus they began to be assumed as new sources of teaching for the space revolution (Shinohara, 1958).
While in Western countries the fascination for Japanese traditional architecture was growing more and more, in Japan the modernism architecture was finally establishing itself. Indeed, the 1950s was a decade characterized by the demand for inexpensive and efficient homes for the housing boom caused by the end of the war. Like the so-called *Case Study Houses* sponsored in the United States from 1945 until 1966 by the *Arts & Architecture* magazine, which commissioned major architects of the day to design and build low-cost model houses, also in Japan the magazine *Shinkenchiku*,[7] as early as 1948, supported a competition for minimal-type wooden housing. Among the most noteworthy works were the ones built by the architect Kiyoshi Seike, professor at the Tokyo Institute of

[5] Since has never been translated into English, I have chosen to transcribe the English translation of the title to facilitate the lecture. The original title of the book is *Koko no Kōsei*.
[6] Kishida had the possibility to survey the finest examples of Modern architecture during one-year government-funded trip in Europe and North America; a survey published, between 1929 and 1931, in seventeen volumes under the name *Gendai kenchiku dai kan* (General Survey of Modern Architecture).
[7] First published in August 1925, it is one of Japan's leading architecture journals, whose issues are translated into English under the name of *The Japan Architect*.

Technology, and by Kenzo Tange, Kishida's pupil at the Tokyo Imperial University. Initiated by Seike in 1951 through the design of the Mori House, and continued through the Saito House of 1952, the Miyagi House of 1953, and Tange's own house of 1953, as a group, these series of open-plan houses characterized by raised islands of *tatami* mat marked by *shoji* screens that could be opened or closed at will, recalled Marcel Breuer's house in New Canaan of 1947, Charles and Ray Eames's Case Study House in Los Angeles of 1949, and even Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House of 1950 (Stewart, 1987). Despite the formal vocabulary of these houses became widely considered the models of the time, these countryside palace style dwelling, although their relatively small scale, do not seem to have truly solved the problematic of tradition, and neither the one of modernity. Indeed, in those years the balance between urban growth, suburban development and natural surrounding was not idyllic at all. As the well know Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa has documented in his movie *A Wonderful Sunday* of 1947, in those years the massive urbanization of the population had led the industry to develop a market of prefabricated houses deprived of what was commonly considered the spirit of domesticity. Evident in the uncontrollable disappearance of the most characteristic amenities of Japanese cities, actually, the antithesis between local and universal civilization was showing architects the urgency of answering questions till that time largely ignored.

The hope of discovering new design possibilities related to the intrinsic structure of Japanese architecture led the architect Kazuo Shinohara,[8] researcher at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, to start in 1953 a series of studies entitled *Methods in Japanese Architecture*.[9] Those were the years following World War II and the capability to glean the inner life of things had been renewed by the recent discovery of many archaeological finds revealing a hidden beauty in the depths of the stratifications of history. After the existential anxiety born form the violence of the war, the '*mysterious and disquieting*' force expressed by the objects of the Jōmon culture, the oldest community of Japan, had reinvigorated

[8] During the same period, at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, Shinohara was also the teaching assistant of Kiyoshi Seike's laboratory.

[9] Since this series of papers has never been translated into English, to facilitate the reading I have translated the title. The original title is *Nihonkenchiku no hoho*.

the idea to defend and safeguard the history of the origins (Kawabata, 2018, p. 99). In the general intent to create an account of national identity, while historians were concentrated in a rigorous study of the development of distinct styles of art and architecture, with the purpose of studying traditional formal structures not only in terms of vertical sequence, the flow of history, but also in terms of horizontal, social spread, Shinohara realized that to preserve the ability to generate vital forms the local culture, more than an immutable datum, had to be assumed as the particular inclination of a more general *world culture*. Flowed into his broader doctoral thesis on *The Study of the Spatial Composition in Japanese Architecture*,[10] Shinohara's research had unveiled that *'space'*, a universal concept still perceived as peculiar to Western and Modernist architecture, was actually the most reliable benchmark to propose contemporary Japanese architecture and, at the same time, to reveal its uniqueness.

Indeed, in 1952, when Frank Llyod Wright, during a conference held in New York entitled *The Destruction of the Box*, recalled how much had been influenced by the reading of Okakura's *The Book of Tea*, in which the famous verses of the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tze were quoted, Japanese architects understood that the traditional conception of space had been misinterpreted by Westerners (Isozaki, 2011). According to Okakura:

> 'He [Lao-Tze] claimed that only in vacuum lay the truly essential. The reality of a room, for instance, was to be found in the vacant space enclosed by the roof and walls, not in the roof and walls themselves. The usefulness of a water pitcher dwelt in the emptiness where water might be put, not in the form of the pitcher or the material of which it was made. Vacuum is all potent because all containing. In vacuum alone motion becomes possible. One who could make of himself a vacuum into which others might freely enter would become master of all situations. The whole can always dominate the part'. (Okakura, 1906, pp. 59-60)

[10] Unfortunately, Shinohara's doctoral dissertation has not been preserved. However, the synthesis of his doctoral dissertation was resumed inside Shinohara's book *Jūtaku kenchiku* (Residential Architecture) published in 1964. The English title of the PhD dissertation is reported in Shinohara biography inside his book *16 House and Architectural Theory*, Bijutsu Shuppan-sha, Tokyo, 1971.

Wright's confidence in declaring that Lao-Tze's exemplification of an omnipresent vacuum could be compared to his design theory of a space objectified by the 'destruction' of architectural enclosures could be a confusion that confronts all architects, so used to the excitement that arises when it seems to touch the most intangible of all concepts. However, it is fundamental to look at things from the right point of view and to remember that, for long time, 'space' had been a specifically Western concept, antithetical to the Buddhist idea of emptiness. While the West has always treated space as something real, Eastern thought had focused on the doctrine of 'non-reality', or Impermanence, expressed by Buddhism through the words kū 空,[11] 'void', 'emptiness', and kokū 虚空, 'mutability' or 'where things could be everything without obstacles'. Therefore, while Modern architecture, as Sigfried Giedion stressed in his *Space, Time and Architecture*, was the plastic expression of the space-time concept developed by modern sciences, it is logical to assume that traditional Japanese architecture, rather than the demonstration of a spatial awareness, was the celebration of the beauty of emptiness. Indeed, when walls vanished as walls, replaced by screens and corner windows, Modern architecture had set a new vision as indicative of a new sense of structure, in which space was no longer something that converges to culminate into a point, but something that from a point or a line radiates to infinity (Giedion, 1941). This sense of spatial extension and continuity, however, did not correspond to the traditional Japanese sensing of space expressed through certain flatness in which depth had been constructed of layers of parallels planes that do not take into account human movements or gradual prospective.

[11] Japanese translation of the Sanskrit *śūnyatā*.

Figure 2. Jiko-in temple. Japan, Yamatokoriyama, Nara Prefecture, 1663. The image represents the intimate space dedicated to the *cha-no-yu* (tea hospitality), a vast *tatami* room that seems to flow into the garden and valley below. Stone step at the edge of the veranda leads to the zen garden of massive camellia and azalea hedges and topiary, inspired by the shapes of tea fields.

According to Shinohara, the perception of '*condensed immobility*' that characterizes traditional Japanese architecture could be compared to the Japanese art of garden (Shinohara, 1964). In particular, the art of *shakkei*, whose meaning is that of a 'landscape captured alive', a term that Japanese use to indicate the art of incorporate different vistas into a single scenography (Itoh, 1973). Like the art of Noh theatre, where the protagonist's firmness captures the audience's subconscious level of mind by a rigid formal aesthetic, Japanese gardens will surprise the visitors by moments of steadiness carefully designed by the monks to produce effects of serenity and wonder. Following the path of one of the many gardens in Kyoto, for example, the one of the Katsura Imperial Villa, the visitor, concentrated at looking down to the irregular rhythm of the stones that mark the route, all of a sudden, will be surprised by the appearance of a wonderful landscape that opens up through the vegetation. Through these special moments or vistas, in Japanese gardens what is contemplated is not a continuous, organic space but the '*non-continuity*' of the landscape (Shinohara, 1964).

Figure 3. Detail of the map of Jingo-ji temple in Kyoto, 1230. In the possession of the temple. From the plan, it is evident that the temple and its grounds were not conceived as a geometric space designed according to a single coordinate system, but as a space in which the visitor while walking could continually meet new scenes.

Reflecting on the compositional method of Japanese art, Shinohara attempted to construct a mental model of modern and traditional architecture to compare different spatial conceptions. Shinohara has in fact imagined to introduce a camera in one of the houses designed by Frank Llyod Wright and one inside the Jiko-in,[12] a temple famous for its meditation room from which it is possible to contemplate a wonderful garden that contrasts with the distant view of the Yamato plains and hills. Shinohara considered that, since in Wright's houses several rooms are connected one after the other through thin folds of the ceiling, floor and walls, in this case, space, organically developing, can be perfectly understood through the cinematographic technique that, sliding the camera on a track that runs along the floor or the ceiling, perfectly capture the space in its entirety. Shinohara had thus imagined that the cinematographic technique could be assumed as the spatial model itself of Wright's houses. Imagining then to introduce the same camera inside the Jiko-in temple, Shinohara had observed that to capture this space in its entirety it would be sufficient to place the

[12] Founded in Nara in 1663 by tea master Katagiri Sekishû, this temple belongs to the Rinzai sect of the Zen Buddhism.

camera in a low point on the floor and rotate it on itself. With respect to the previous case, then, in the Jiko-in temple the cinematographic technique would not have the same representative effectiveness. Shinohara had thus concluded that the more the cinematographic technique is used as a spatial model of traditional Japanese architecture, the more this model moves away from its true essence (Shinohara, 1964). In light of this, it is interesting to bring to the attention the questions arisen in Shinohara following these imaginary cinematic experiences. According to Shinohara:

> Space of contemporary architecture is like Wright's space, that is, a space recorded by the movement of the human eye, comparable to the world narrated by the protagonist who speaks in first person, the 'I' of literature. Since Renaissance, space is constituted by the presence of the 'I', so it is natural for us to think that the point of view is the human one. But, in the architecture of the previous eras what points of view existed? There was not a different mechanism of the point of view? Looking at the particular composition of traditional Japanese architecture, such as that of Jiko-in, it shows us a completely different mechanism of the point of view. The point of view there does not belong to man but to architecture itself, as if in literature the world was described by the third person, that is, a universal person who embodies history. Reflecting on these different mechanisms of the point of view I began to think that by freely changing the first, second and third person we can find a new way of recording space. Or, perhaps, that introducing the point of view of a fourth person, who has nothing to do with the previous three, we could describe a 'space without point of view'. (Shinohara, 1964, p. 180)

Like Janus, the Roman god of doorways and transitions, that with his double faces at the same time looks the inside and the outside, the past and the future, so Shinohara began to assume tradition and modernity as two stances of a single issue through which criticise both. Indeed, trying to understand the compositional logic that distinguishes two different realities, a local and a global one, rather than a technician, Shinohara seems to have lived that agitation

typical of artists or, more generally, of all intellectuals who deal with emotions and human feelings. A disquiet, that of Shinohara, which in my opinion resembles the one that moved Paul Ricoeur to write, in 1961, his famous essay *Universal Civilization and National Cultures*, quoted by Kenneth Frampton in 1980 to open his reflections *Towards a Critical Regionalism*. The '*space without point of view*' of which Shinohara speaks about could then be the confirmation of that will of '*real dialogues*' between civilizations that, renouncing to exercise '*the dogmatism of a single truth*', attempt to meet '*different civilizations by means other than the shock of conquest and domination*' (Ricoeur, 1965, p. 277). This is the reason why *The Fourth Space* had become the title of the last chapter of *Residential Architecture*, a short essay published in 1964 where, encouraging a return to the theme of housing as a design opportunity for a critical relationship between mental, social and physical space, Shinohara whished the advent of a '*new irrational space*' that architecture of Japanese society could have accomplished by offering the eye a multitude of possible perspectives that are always coherent yet always new (Shinohara, 1964, p. 181). *The Fourth Space*: the metaphor of an inner dimension that turns on imagination.

Figure 4. The Tanikawa Residence by Kazuo Shinohara, 1974. Photo by Koji Taki. The image depicts the 'summer space' of the house, where the slope of the terrain had been left in its bareness and covered by a 45-degree pitched roof. The different coordinates that generate this space are accentuated by the many 'point of view' of the people in the photo.

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PIERO BOTTONI
Three houses on the Tyrrhenian Sea

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Abstract

Piero Bottoni is one of the major representatives of Italian rationalism and a leading figure in the critical revision of modernism. Between 1931 and 1945 he designs three 'villas' close to each other on the Tyrrhenian Sea: 'Villa Latina' (1930), 'Villa Ludolf' (1941) and 'Villa nella pineta' (1945). Focusing on a critical reading of these three projects, the paper would like to demonstrate the growing influence of the landscape and the regional characters in the maturation of the sensitivity and the thought of one of the most important architects of Italian modernism.

Keywords: Piero Bottoni, Modernism, Regionalism, Houses, Mediterranean Sea

Piero Bottoni graduated in architecture at the Milan Polytechnic in 1926, he participated in the First Italian Exhibition of Rational Architecture in 1928 with a series of watercolours entitled *Architectural Cromatisms* that brought the acclaim of Le Corbusier. Around the same time, he was one of the founders of the Italian Movement for Rational Architecture (MIAR) along with people like Adalberto Libera, Mario Ridolfi, Luigi Figini, Gino Pollini, Ignazio Gardella, Giuseppe Pagano and Giuseppe Terragni. From 1930, he was a member and delegate of the CIAM and throughout his career played -with great civil commitment- a leading role in the national panorama of Italian town planning and architecture.

Paolo Portoghesi, talking about Bottoni, recalls the pride with which he accepted the merit of being among the first to bring about and support rationalist intelligence in Italy (Portoghesi, 1998, p.336), while Carlo Olmo reminds us how Bottoni was a protagonist in the critical revision of modernism (Olmo, 2000, p.298). Being first among the promulgators and first among the critics of the modern movement at the same time are two seemingly irreconcilable roles that Piero Bottoni held thanks to his moral yet not dogmatic adherence to the principles introduced by modernism. In fact, from the beginning, his stance was always quite deaf 'to the cries of the strapaesan fanatics' and much more sensitive to a congenital 'Mediterraneanism, intended in the spirit, and not in

the forms or in the folklore' (Bottoni, 1933, p.84). These last words come from the *Programma di Architettura*, a sort of manifesto signed by Bottoni, Figini, Pollini, BBPR and others and published in the first issue of the magazine *Quadrante* of May 1933. The *Programma* well represents a stance of a generation of young Italian architects in which 'Mediterraneanism' is more a shared feeling, or ideological tension, instead of a common style or taste for specific architectural forms.[1]

Reading in chronological order a group of 'houses by the sea'[2] designed by Piero Bottoni, it is possible to observe with more clarity than elsewhere a maturation in the sensibility and architectural thought of this passionate supporter of the dictates of new modernity (embraced above all with a revolutionary spirit towards 20th century academicism), towards a freer and more instinctive search to the satisfaction of the most ancient and natural needs of man ('I was one of the first defenders of the natural values of life' (Bottoni, 1973, p.350)). As early as 1932, Bottoni stated: 'Among the rational needs of the home, it is imperative not to forget the foremost important need of living: the need, that the poetry and sensitivity of the artist, as a man before technician, will have been felt and resolved' (Bottoni, 1932 a, p.147). Asking himself from the beginning about what architecture talks to the soul of man, 'to the soul of the non-theoretical man' (Bottoni, 1931, p.120), is what probably *planted* in Bottoni that *seed in fertile soil* that germinated healthily, strong over the years, chasing the warm rays of the sun more than the sterile coldness of neon lamps.

Perhaps we could already find this *seed* by digging under the large loggia open 'to the sea and to the mountain' of *Villa Latina*. This house, designed in Bonassola, overlooking the Tyrrhenian Sea, was presented in 1930 for a national competition about the project of 'a modern villa for the family home' announced on the occasion of the 4th International Exhibition in Monza. Bottoni's project was the undisputed key player among the modernist trend proposals presented[3] and contained in essence all the sensitivity and tension expressed in his best architectures of the following decades.

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[1] For a broader discussion of this theme the reader should refer to *Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean,* edited by Jean-Francois Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino.

[2] Reference is made to a group of works and projects for private clients, concentrated mainly on the coasts of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the island of Capri, between 1929 and 1969. Among them: *Studio di villa al mare* (1929), *Studio per un grande albergo al mare* (1929), *Villa Latina* (1930), *Casa al mare alla V Triennale di Milano* (1932), *Villa Ludolf* (1941), *Studio di palazzina con negozi* (1941), *Casa ideale su palafitte* (1943), *Casetta al mare Savini* (1944), *Villa nella pineta* (1945), *restauro della Grotta di Fra' Felice* (1958), *Casetta con piscina in via Tiberio* (1961), *Villa la Quercia* (1967)

[3] It is interesting to note that important figures such as Franco Albini demonstrate in this competition to be still strongly linked to the 20th century neoclassicism.

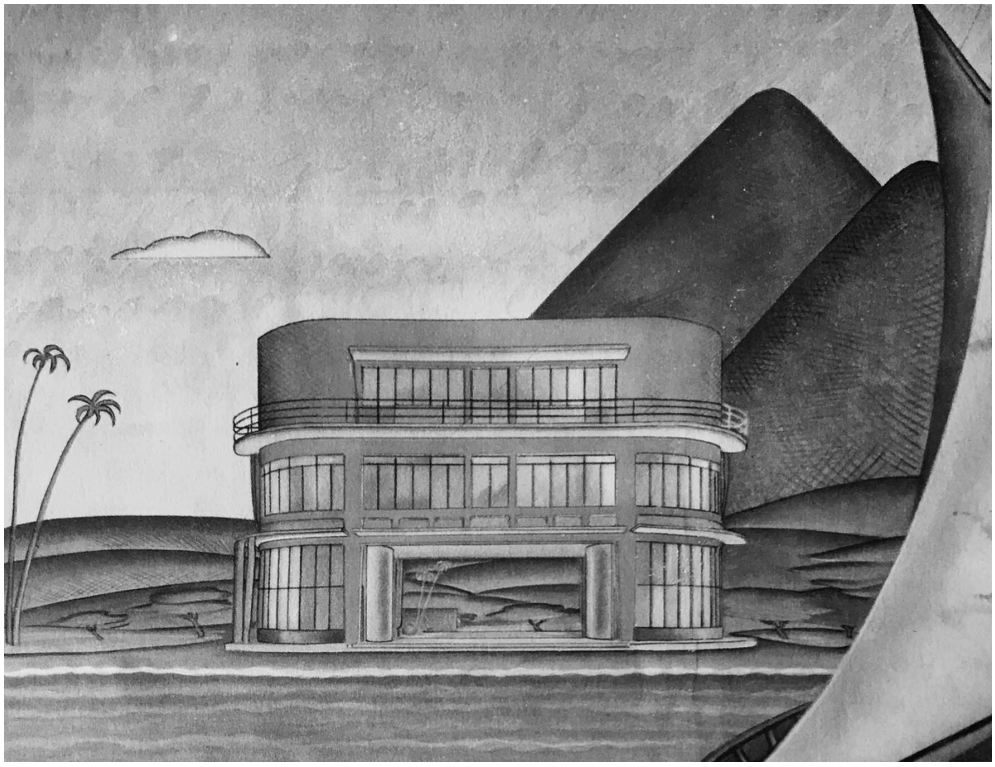

Figure 1. *Villa Latina*, Bonassola, Italy, 1930. (Archivio Piero Bottoni, Dastu, Politecnico di Milano)

> This villa wants to reclaim, from the spirit of Latin constructions, the balance of the volumes, from the outdoor life customs of the Mediterranean peoples, the loggias, the atria and terraces, from the houses of the Tyrrhenian coast the colour, from the technical possibility that belongs only to today and its structure. It rises in a garden, on the edge of a pine forest by the sea. It does not block off the landscape but is crossed by it. (Bottoni, 1930, p. 33)

Bottoni's words are very clear and leave no room for false interpretations; his project for a 'modern villa' is intended to be deeply rooted in the tradition of that place, of that peninsula and of the entire Mediterranean basin. The technique is contemporary, modern[4], but with this newness Bottoni tries to fish deep into the history of local buildings (‘from the houses of the rivers running into the Tyrrhenian Sea'), Roman ones ('Latin construction') and all the more or less anonymous and spontaneous 'terraces' and 'loggias' that overlook each bank of the Mare Nostrum.

[4] For the building’s structure Bottoni chooses a reinforced-concrete frame system.

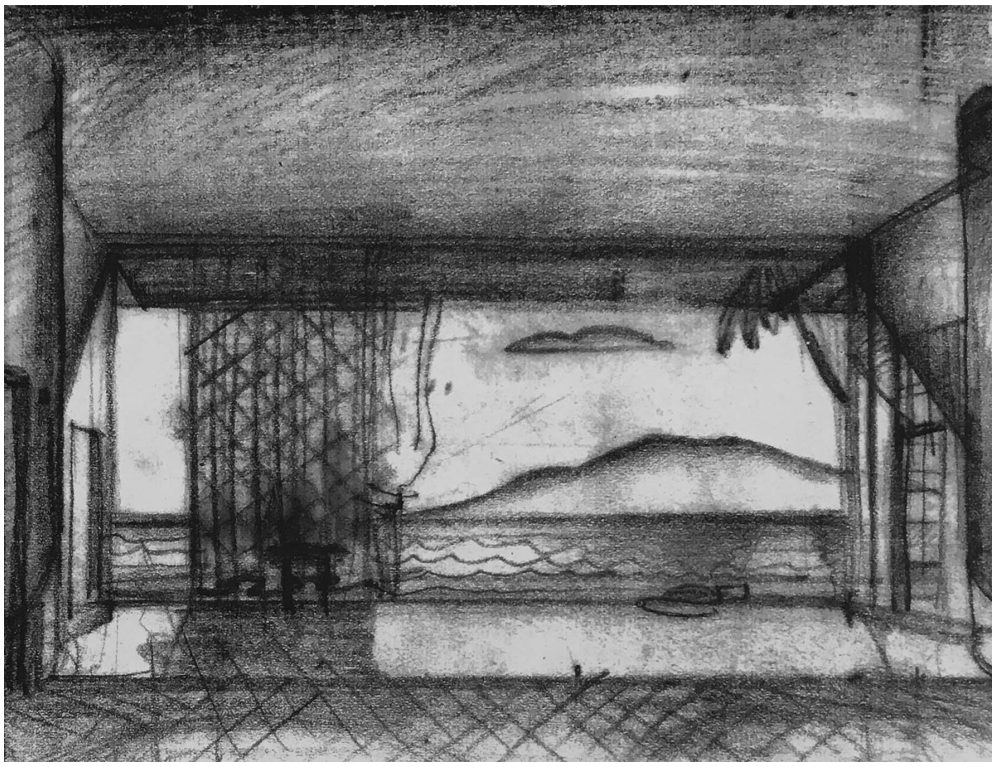

Figure 2. *Villa Latina*, Bonassola, Italy, 1930. (Archivio Piero Bottoni, Dastu, Politecnico di Milano)

This sea and this landscape are recognised as active, essential features of the scene, inhabitants that 'cross' architecture, longing for human companions. The contact with the landscape -even though quite generic- is very strong and Bottoni's painting of the Villa (Figure 1) is emblematic: the building proudly stands as a triumphal arch for a sail boat coming from the sea, as inhabited threshold between the Tyrrhenian and the Apuan Alps, static, there, painted with the same color of the many others solitary and stereometric houses of the North-Tyrrhenian rock coast.

Notwithstanding Bottoni does not want to make of all this a formal issue, but a matter of 'spirit', the facade's solution, the strongly geometric approach of the volume, as well as the rigidity of a still immature development of the plans, demonstrate how the project of *Villa Latina* (shaped on a series of sketches from 1929 made for other projects *by the sea*[5]) is still anchored to a bitter reception of the new European modernist influences. Nevertheless the words and drawings of the young architect strongly transcend the 'arid

[5] Reference is made to *Studio di villa al mare* and *Studio per un grande albergo al mare*, both from 1929. The drawings of these two studios kept at the Piero Bottoni Archive in Milan illustrate the gestation of the *Villa Latina* project starting from the development of the large loggia on the ground floor, a true embryo of many of Bottoni's future projects.

and at the same time sad' (Bottoni, 1931, p.120) architecture of certain international exhibitions, aiming straight at what really seems to count: 'giving a moral ease to our life itself and a safe, lasting hospitality to our spirit and sensibilities, so that culture and experience have nobly enriched us', as Gio Ponti wrote in the introduction to the catalogue of the competition, which seems to have had on his deck the perspective view from the loggia of *Villa Latina* when he put the following words on paper: "the best of these projects are like real interpretations of the dwelling, of our life and, if we like, of our civilisation" (Ponti, 1930, introduction).

> Italian rationalists are much more concerned than some critics believe about preserving the spirit of tradition intact, a spirit that is becoming clearer and more assertive every day in its achievements. This spirit does not reside in the narrow superficial classicism, in the decorative detail, in the historicism, in the archaeological re-enactments, but in a superior classicism of the spirit. (Bottoni, 1933, p.84)

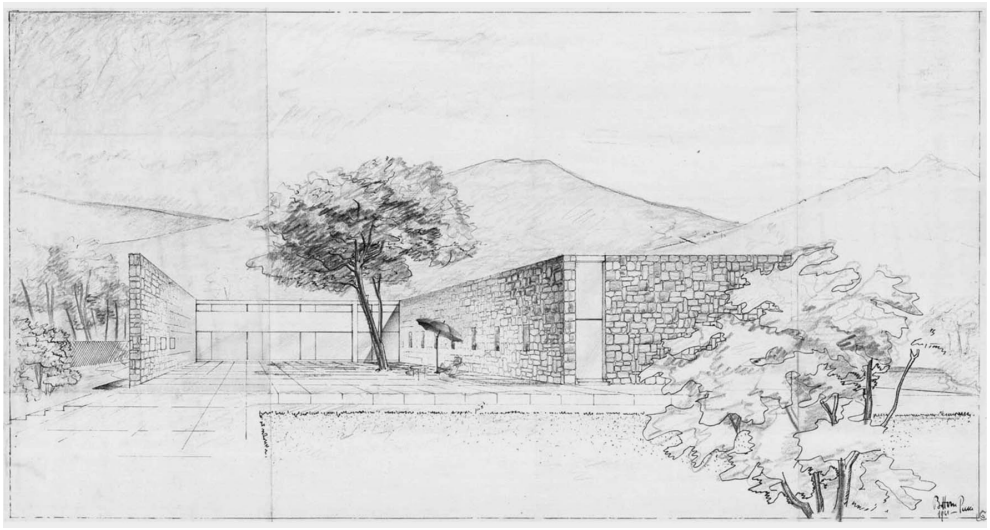

Figure 3. Villa Ludolf, Marina di Massa, Italy, 1941. (Archivio Piero Bottoni, Dastu, Politecnico di Milano)

Overlooking the same Tyrrhenian Sea, a couple of miles south of *Villa Latina*, Piero Bottoni had the opportunity in 1941 to design another house, *Villa Ludolf*: a 'typical example of a Mediterranean villa' (Consonni, 1973, p.45). The client was the countess Marie Ludolf Fabbri, widowed at the time of Bottoni's project and already owner of an existing villa on the site. The drawings made for the Countess Ludolf, who probably

gave *carte blanche* to the architect, demonstrate the achievement of full control over the rationalist principles, skilfully shaped here to set a true, serene 'casa all'italiana'[6]. An evolution of Bottoni's language is beginning to be outlined and it will consist in a progressive departure from the vocabulary of the 'absolute rationalism' criticised since the 1930s. The suggestions of the myth of the machine and industry disappear, the volumetric purity of *Villa Latina's* perfect geometries gives way to a softer work on architectural type variations. In the plans, a sort of 'Latin' gene pool is still perceivable but now any monumentally is lost. In the facades, the flat colour of the plaster is replaced by the warmer texture of the stone masonry, as in many modest country buildings nearby.[7]

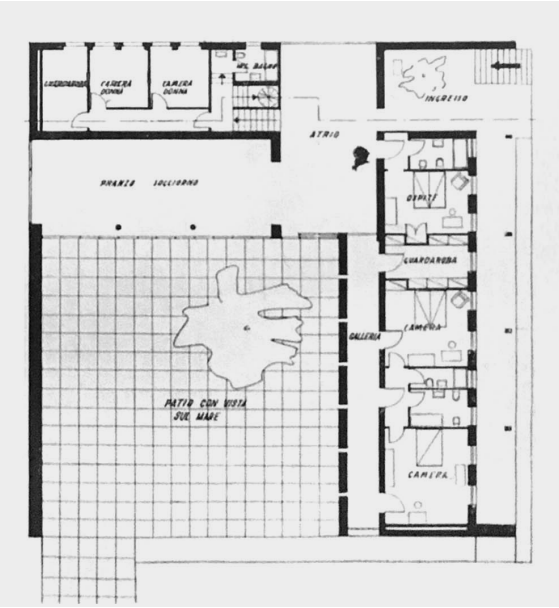

Figure 4. *Villa Ludolf*, Marina di Massa, Italy, 1941. (Archivio Piero Bottoni, Dastu, Politecnico di Milano)

What remains is the fixed idea of a building shaped on the dialogue with the landscape, with the Apuan Mountains and the Tyrrhenian Sea brought inside the Villa. Entering in the building from the east, in the large entrance hall there are in fact two large windows, one to the south and one to the north, and there -to welcome us- are the Tyrrhenian Sea to our left and the Apuan Mountains to our right. Bottoni deliberately raises the entire building on a base so it 'allows the sea view to be above the line of vehicle

[6] Reference is made to the 'Italian house' described by Gio Ponti in the first issue of Domus in 1928.
[7] In the 1930s these cost areas were almost undeveloped, behind a first line of summer villas and pinedwoods, and before a series of small towns at the foot of the Apuan Alps, there were only rural and little populated plains, few and small farmhouses built with local stones.

encumbrance along the coast' (Bottoni, 1943 b, p.395) and places a large courtyard with a panoramic viewpoint over the sea. On this terrace, he opens the large living room: a big *loggia* -or *exedra*- from which you can see south and west. In Villa Ludolf the contact with the landscape becomes a sort of very precise driving force, not more generic, but carefully pointed in multiple and selected directions. Bottoni tries to build a modern, functional villa working with local context, architectural tradition and landscape; his search for laying roots in the place is explicit: Villa Ludolf seems to be made almost exclusively of simple local stone walls, it could be almost a ruin, left there from times long gone by.

At Ronchi di Marina di Massa, a few hundred yards from the *Villa Ludolf* lot, in 1945 Bottoni built a house for himself. A few years earlier, in the document attached to Casabella 187, some words by Bottoni himself portrayed a condition of change in the values of a generation in the face of the drama of war and its consequent implications on architecture. The house was considered the founding theme from which to start:

> We needed war, this tragedy that has become universal and raw today, which is gradually discovering and distinguishing the frills of conventions from truly human attitudes; eternal values from fictitious ones, to bring back to its proper value as an altar, a domestic altar, the house of man. [...] their function as a collection, a refuge, a meeting place for life counts, and they are remembered, thought out, longed for in the anguish of a trench or in the presence of the ruins of the city. (Bottoni, 1943 a, p.229)

After the war anyone with a modicum of civil conscience could not help but consider scandalous every selfishness and every exhibition of luxury. It was a time of self-criticism, introspection, 'humility (pride), high spirit' (Bottoni, 1943 a, p.229). It was on this *land* that Bottoni built his house by the sea, 'avoiding any abstraction [...] without yielding to the expressions of the false rural, but respecting the landscape, adapting it, as if the villa were born from the land on which it stands, part of the nature that surrounds it' (Bottoni, 1995, p.38). Almost as if they were part of a single body, two of the stone walls of *Villa Ludolf* stand here narrow among the pines of this small forest near the sea[8], inside them, finally finds light the loggia that has been pursuing since the early studies of *Villa Latina*, a loggia that this time must be split into height to master the sea view. A room that looks out onto the sea, a minimal dwelling, well beyond a

[8] Bottoni, in an article on the architectural magazine *Metron,* explains how the dimensions of this small retreat are influenced by the possibility to 'keep untouched the dense wood of holm oaks and pines' (Bottoni, 1948, p.32).

mature exercise of *existenzminimum*, the construction of this shelter means the sublimation of every abstract and theoretical premise of the modernism and constitutes the finding of a sentimental adherence with the body of the world.

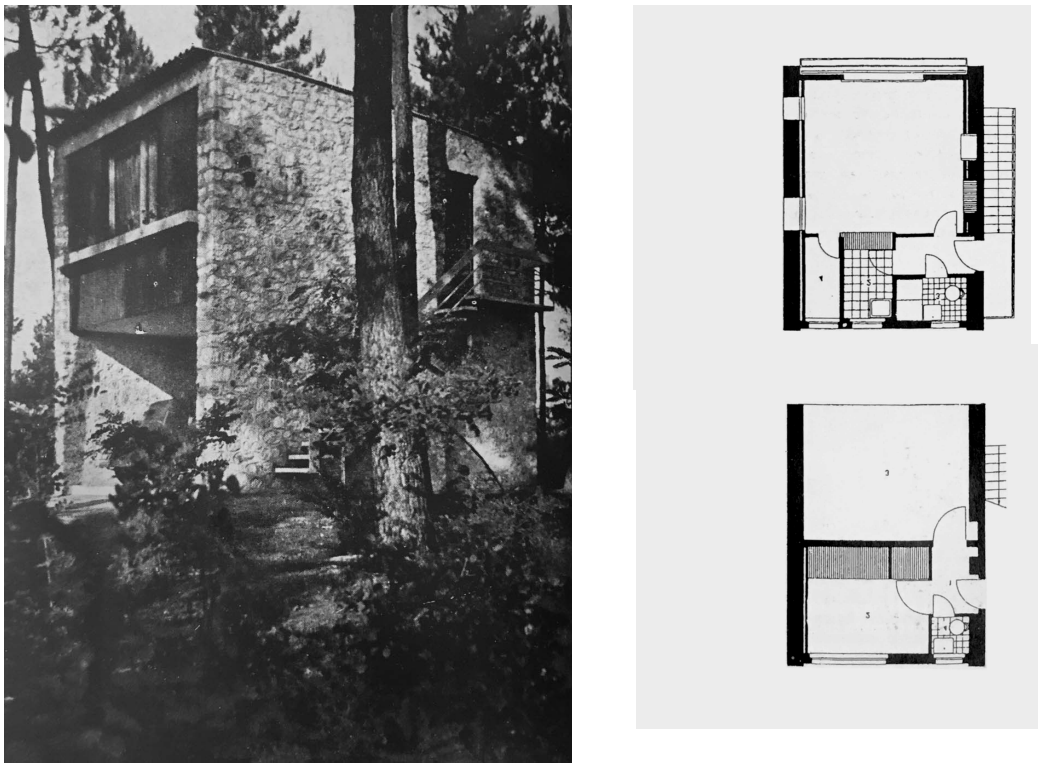

Figure 5. *Villa nella Pineta*, Marina di Massa, Italy, 1945. (Archivio Piero Bottoni, Dastu, Politecnico di Milano)

The materials, solutions and dimensions of the project reduce almost at zero the distances between man and the surroundings, here the contact with the landscape becomes *skin to skin* and it is perceivable the intent of the architect to live not only close, but really inside the nature. A *cabanon*, a pulsing 'House like me' for which Malaparte himself could provide valid words about his famous villa on the Island of Capri: 'secret form of my spirit, hard, severe [...] secret image of my prison [...] of my nostalgia' (Martellini, 1991). Bottoni seems to build his little house looking at many of the rural buildings in this coastal area, with one or two storeys yet often consisting of a single room protected by stone walls; he builds his modern lodge using almost only local tradition, moving away from even the most dignified references to a certain 'Latin' architecture still present in the projects of *Villa Latina* and *Villa Ludolf*. Bottoni realised that the 'intimacy, serenity and welcome' of a shelter (Bottoni, 1949, p.34) flourish

maybe more easily in modest and anonymous buildings, as long as attention is paid to establishing a respectful dialogue with the natural landscape and with the built landscape, and as long as that architecture had 'at least the merit of wanting to look like what it is... and nothing more'. (Bottoni, 1932 b, p.149). With *Villa nella pineta*, Bottoni's rational architecture finds a full correspondence with the imperishable needs of man, through the lesson of tradition, and "the poetry and sensitivity of the artist" it really satisfies 'the foremost and most important' need to live (Bottoni, 1932 a, p.147) demonstrating how can no exist real architecture that is not an ethical reflection of the human soul or that prescinds from the creation of a sincere physical and emotional relationship between space, body of man and body of the place.

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AGRARIAN IDEALS IN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE SCHOOLS

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Abstract

In the United States, the school stands out as a building type attempting to coalesce American modernism and agrarianism. Stylistically rural schools built since the mid-twentieth century are typically modern, yet a few hint at representing an agrarian ideology that has persisted from Thomas Jefferson. Two case studies topically illustrate changing attitudes of agrarianism as found in school architecture over the last 75 years - Richard Neutra's unbuilt "School in the Neighborhood Center" (1944) and the Buckingham County Primary + Elementary School (2012) in Virginia by VMDO Architects. The former school appears at the transition from schools built for small towns to city suburbs while trying to preserve and embody aspects of a Jeffersonian agrarian society, a political orientation. The latter school design is a recent school project in a rural county expressing the qualities of the local land, an ecological orientation. Together, these schools suggest some possibilities and limits of associating agrarianism with architecture.

Keywords: Agrarianism, Schools, Richard Neutra, VMDO Architects

With a country that is as culturally, climatically, and socially diverse as the United States, architectural identity based on national and regional settings is tensive if not contradictory. Since the nation's founding, Americans have struggled to define both American architecture and the American citizen. One persistent interpretation is agrarianism, which is relatively obscure in academic scholarship but has nonetheless existed since the Early Republic era (1780s-1850s). As the name implies agrarianism refers to a primarily agricultural society in terms of economics and politics. It is an ideology that is reactionary to modernism if understood as technological advancement and industrialization. It is certainly anti-urban by encouraging people to leave cities and resettle on farms and in market towns. In other words, it defies what we would consider architecture, but it is latent in American architectural theory and frequently manifests in rural grade schools.

The school is an overlooked but exemplary building type associated with agrarian values in the United States, partly because of Jefferson's belief in an educated society as a safeguard for democracy and the US's predominately rural population until the twentieth century. During the nineteenth century, education reformers in the Northeast gave considerable attention to improving rural schools by including educational gardens and fixing dilapidated school buildings in order to dignify American villages (Downing, 1853; Barnard 1850). One hundred years later, once the American population concentrated around cities, idealized plans for American schools depicted buildings with a domestic scale in a landscaped site to ensure one's individuality in a rural-esque setting against the then perceived threat of Communism's urban socialism (Esenwein, 2016a). In both generalized instances, there is an analogy in envisioning the school building as the cultural centre of a small community nurturing American individuality and democracy in a natural setting that is either authentically agrarian or a representation of an agrarian community (i.e., the suburb).

The two case studies presented here are distant chronologically and stylistically, but are close topically. The first case study, by Richard Neutra, is a new school proposal, with a seemingly nostalgic idea. Neutra's description of the plan includes references to homesteaders and children growing up on farms, an agrarian vision which contradicts the reality of childhood in the post-war suburbs for which his schools were built. The second case study, by VMDO Architects, is one of the few recent rural school projects aimed at improving the dignity of a rural community, another agrarian vision, but ignored the decreasing population of the area as people move to larger cities. Both schools thus depict ideals of agrarianism, such as learning from the land and representations of rural values in the building's design while having to balance modern society becoming increasingly urbanised. The comparison of the two schools also demonstrate that while Neutra's ideal plan is optimistic in embodying an agrarian society, the VMDO school suggests that in today's American society, the values of agrarianism can only be, at best, signified on the building.

Agrarian Ideals and American Modernism

The premise of agrarian ideology is in an idealized characterization of the American farmer. Thomas Jefferson (1785, Letter) was one of the most notable formulators of agrarian virtue, claiming: '…*cultivators of the earth* [i.e., common farmers] *are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, & they are tied to their country & wedded to it's liberty & interests by the most lasting bands*.' Jefferson's agrarian description has European antecedents, being closer to Locke's natural right of property than the French Physiocratic class structure and single tax plan, which would hurt small farmers (Eisinger, 1947). In turn, Jefferson's critique of cities was a moral position as much as economical though his scathing criticism of the ills of European cities, though he softened his position later in life (Jefferson, 1787). Another proto-agrarian was Ralph Waldo Emerson (1904), whose essay on farming famously describes how cities made people artificial and that true human character can be found in those who practice farming. Jefferson, Emerson, as well as a number of American intellectuals had an ambivalent relationship to the city, for while they held it in contempt they also patronized its high-culture institutions (White, 1964). Jefferson was very active in the Parisian *salons* and Emerson regularly went to Boston society clubs, but both found respite at their homes just beyond the edges of the city. Leo Marx (2000) labelled this tension as the "middle landscape" which was a nineteenth century rationality for mediating between the American landscape and modernity, particularly in terms of technology. This tension continued into the twentieth century, partly with regards to technology and considerably with regards to a perceived loss of community engagement that was associated with the rural small town. The architecture of rural modern schools, therefore, had to reanimate the citizenship of the farmer by questioning the degree of urbanity of an agrarian town.

When the Modern Movement began to appear in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s, there was a minority group of literary critics and historians in the South who were critical of the political and economic influence the North had over the region. The agrarians accused the North of enticing southerners to leave the farms and move into the cities while at the same time industrializing family

farms into large commercial operations. This resulted in a massive population migration to Northern cities for better opportunities while those who remained became tenant farmers who no longer had any control over their land. In turn, farmers were frustrated in loss of ownership which was seen as a loss of independence that they equated to the worker's plight in Northern factories.

Because southerners still saw themselves as being regionally distinct culturally and economically from the North, they decided to redevelop their agricultural economy to counter industrialization. The hope was that they could convince southerners to remain on their farms. While this was a regional ambition specifically focused on the South, the more ambitious agrarians hoped to inspire other regions in the US, particularly out West, to politically and economically resist the influence of the North (Stewart, 1965).

One of the southern agrarian leaders, Frank Owsley (1935), identified five pillars of agrarianism as an attempt to try to define the core tenents of their ideology and begin to outline a practical course of action for a new southern society. In brief they were: 1) to have the government purchase land that was currently neglected by commercial ownership and lease it to farmers who had no property but demonstrated the industriousness and a willingness to work the land; 2) improve farming techniques that made the soil more productive for agriculture rather than having the nutrients being wasted away; 3) to do this would necessitate that the reorganized farms to first grow subsistence crops for food then, additionally, grow cash crops; 4) that farmers would be given the same tax benefits and commercial fairness as what had been relegated for industry by government policies; 5) to establish regional governments rather than state governments so that the districting would be based upon land-use considerations so that representation in government more accurately reflected actual ways of local living conditions.

Given the agrarians concentration in the South and their anti-urban, and arguably anti-modern, rhetoric, it would seem unlikely that modern American architects would have any affinity for agrarianism. Frank Lloyd Wright would be the one obvious exception with respect to his Taliesin Fellowship program and Broadacre

City proposal. While historians associate Wright's ideas with those of Jefferson, any influence by the southern agrarians remains unclear in Wright scholarship (Fishman, 1982; De Long, 1998; Levine, 2016). That is a topic for another paper, for our purposes it is important to note that Wright remains the definitive advocate for the complete dismantling of the modern city without rebuilding it and that he presents his ideas around the same time as the Southern agrarians are publishing their anti-urban rhetoric.

Wright may have been the most emphatic modern architect with an agrarian vision, but he was not alone in seeking an architecture that was appropriate for rural areas. His former employee Richard Neutra also challenged architects to sincerely consider ways in which architecture could improve rural living. Perhaps his time working and living at Taliesin during the 1920s instilled a sensitivity for farming communities. If not, his appointment as a design supervisor in Puerto Rico during WWII certainly compelled him to undertake building programs aimed at improving life in isolated parts of the island with new schools and health clinics (Neutra, 1948; Esenwein, 2016b). The culmination of these small projects around Puerto Rico appeared in an ideal school plan that was meant as a model for rural American town.

Neutra's Agrarian Academical Village

Neutra had an affinity for the agrarian model of education when he thought about school designs. In a 1935 issue of *Architecture Forum* he wrote: '*These children (for example on a farmstead) acquired experience at home in working with others, in overcoming practical difficulties, in learning the value of work and the worth of the things about them*' (Neutra, 1935, p. 25). He reiterated the value of learning on a farm at an urban planning symposium held in New York in 1944 by explaining that the farm was a classroom and that children learned by doing chores which was part of the farm's operations and thereby contributing to what was essentially a small community (Neutra 1944a). Throughout his mid-career, Neutra was sensitive to rural education and indeed found value in it. His frequency of comparing the farm to the classrooms seemed to be more than lip service by

observing that contemporary pedagogical practices lacked direct experience. Typical school designs of the day, which were based on Beaux Arts plans and classical facades, reflected typical pedagogy by containing children in a box room with full attention to the teacher lecturing. If school designs were to reflect John Dewey's (1978) progressive education, they had to be equally progressive in their plans and appearance.

In his 1944 New York presentation, Neutra quoted at great length a W.P.A. (Work Progress Administration) guide on Vermont schools and how these schools, with limited means, instructed students to be engaged citizens in the community as well as working on the farm. Neutra was enthusiastic about the possibilities for school architecture on a national level and was supportive of the experiments in Vermont. In particular, his critique of the Vermont rural schools led him to imagine the New England town Common as a space, or rather field, encouraging community engagement. His concluding remark on the W.P.A. passage was: '*The school and its ground may be significant supplement and the normal nucleus of the neighborhood!*' (1944a, p. 67). In the context of Neutra's idyllic New England Common, the role of the ground was doubly important, not only as a public lot for the school but that the shaping of the ground as part of the school implied an architectural gesture. It was a statement in which Neutra translated the agrarian ideal of the ground into an architectural consideration.

Neutra's "School in the Neighborhood Center" appeared in the March 1944 issue of *Architectural Record*, the same year he presented the value of rural schools at the New York symposium (Fig. 1). In the neighbourhood centre description, Neutra related the facility to a nineteenth century prairie settlement: '*As in the days of the pioneers and the homesteaders, children may again share spaces and facilities with adults…There will be shops for all, stables, sties, a farmyard for animal husbandry, a green nursery and gardens*' (1944b, p. 98). Indeed, this school plan levelled a common ground for an entire town; it included a library, gymnasium, agricultural fields and stables, a grocery store, an exhibition hall, and a health clinic. The classrooms were adjacent to the town Common, both at the conceptual centre of the facility.

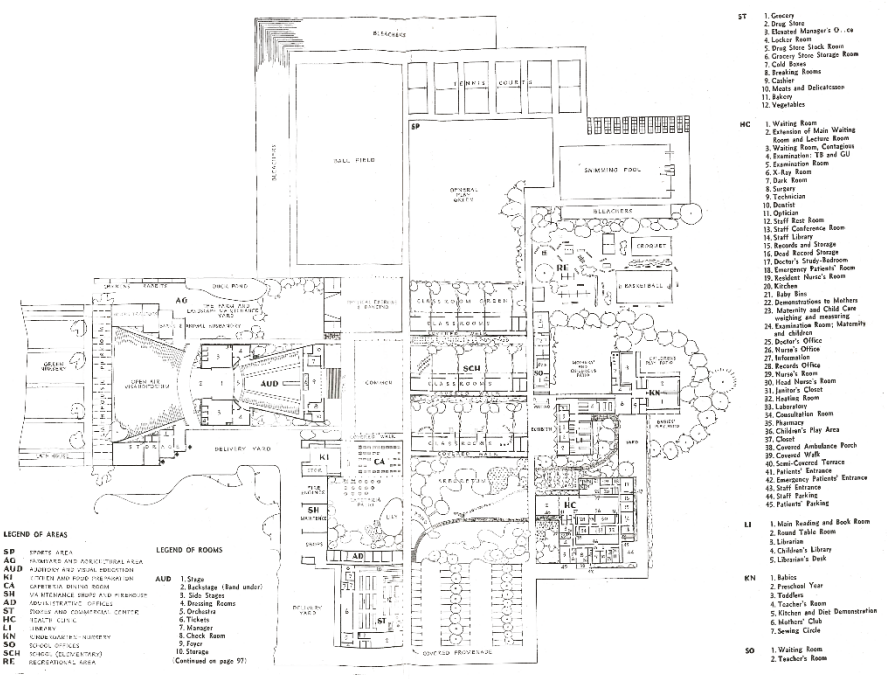

Figure 1. Richard J. Neutra (1944). "The School in the Neighborhood Center". Plan from *Architectural Record* (March).

While Neutra did not directly describe in detail the areas labelled on his plan, his previous designs in Puerto Rico and his later book *Survival Through Design* (1954) would imply that food and hygiene were paramount to its organization. Children learned about plants in the vegetable gardens at the rear of the outdoor classrooms. As they grew older, they could join the farmers in learning about new agricultural practices. Even the health clinic had a medicinal garden so that nurses or future doctors could combine their childhood knowledge of plants with a more specialized knowledge in medicine (Neutra 1948; 1954). On the opposite side of the complex, the kitchen would serve produce and meat from the fields and pastures. The same would be true for the grocery store noted at the very bottom area of the plan, which shares the same delivery drive passing the agricultural fields and kitchen. Agriculture served as a general course of study which helped unify various trades across the school and their relationships among classroom garden, medicinal garden, and field were all organized by the plan. Neutra's school plan was an agrarian market town centred on education.

Neutra scholarship has yet to make tangible connections between his ideas and the agrarian movement during the 1930s when he began experimenting with school design. It is very possible he had no knowledge of the group given their limited regional influence in the South while Neutra was establishing himself in California (Hines, 2005; Lamprecht, 2010). Nonetheless, there are clear affinities between the two with respect to elevating the quality of American agrarian towns and trying to address a perceived loss in how people engage each other and the environment. Neutra translated this into shaping a common ground for society to gather which became a school, an idea shared by colonial New Englanders and Thomas Jefferson. Thus, like the Southern agrarians who prioritized engaging the earth and questioning the merits of cities, Neutra's school architecture had an intellectual grounding in a rural American society.

VMDO's Contemporary Agrarian School Architecture

There was a vast number of schools built in rural areas following the post-war population boom; though many shared characteristics of Neutra's modernist schools in California, they often did not have the agrarian philosophical considerations he seemed to be engaged with. This seems to be the case in contemporary school designs as well. A case in point are two mid-century modernist schools on the edge of Dillwyn, Virginia (population: 500) in Buckingham County, Virginia, which had a modern aesthetic but without a strong connection to agriculture featured in a Neutra school. This changed in 2012 when VMDO Architects refurbished the two buildings and articulated a design intention that revisited agrarian ideals of the ground, garden, and ecology. In describing the program of the school, VMDO stated: '*Themed around health, the school highlights natural ecologies and local resources to spark environmental awareness, stewardship opportunities, and hands-on learning*' (2012, p. 2).

There are three direct references to agrarianism in the VMDO design, one is shaping the ground, another is nurturing hygiene, and the third correlating areas of the building plan with geographic zones in Virginia. The first is addressed in the architecture, the second in pedagogy, and the third as signage.

The significant ground feature for the school is the rainwater drainage and collection systems. For draining, VMDO made bio swales and shaped the drainage to a retention pond at the rear of the school property. VMDO also designed an elaborate drainage system to collect water in cisterns to be used for plant irrigation for the gardens. The main swale, passing through the connector between the pre-existing buildings, also indicates ground composition, particularly by using slate tiles for an impervious drainage bed to prevent the underlying clay from eroding. There is thus a stratification of the ground revealed in the rain system, grass on top, clay next, and slate as the foundation.

Figure 2. VMDO Architects (2012). Buckingham County Primary + Elementary Schools. Dillwyn, Virginia. Exterior façade materials and bio swale. Photo by author.

Likewise, the school facade appears to represent this same stratification. The ground level of the building entry is clad with slate tile, the second floor is clad with brick, and an appurtenance recessed from the façade plane, made of metal panels, supports the green roof (Fig. 2). The elevation is thus stone, clay, and finish surface, but the materials are now part of artifice. The stone is no longer solid bedrock but tiles with a honed surface mounted vertically with exposed metal clips and the clay has been moulded and harden into bricks, and the roof has plant material. The façade of the school can be interpreted as an architectural

translation of the agrarian concern for the soil, literal enough to make the stratification clear but artificial enough to avoid becoming a postmodern architectural sign.

Figure 3. VMDO Architects (2012). Buckingham County Primary + Elementary Schools. Dillwyn, Virginia. Dining Commons with reflection of entry court on glass. Photo by author.

The focal interior feature for both buildings is the shared "dining common" which consists of the cafeteria, kitchen, and two class areas for food preparation (Fig. 3). The dining common is VMDO's term, which alludes to the New England town Common, though this time situated in the South. Not only does it function as the school cafeteria, but adjoins the "community meeting room" which replaces the auditorium assembly hall commonly found in most schools. VMDO's plan is even more spatially open than Neutra's because the community meeting room and dining common are separated only by a few steps in the floor and the food lab defined by a counter height wall; the two areas are one continuous space which visually extends through glass facing the entry court and the rear garden areas. It must be remembered that the food labs are a pedagogical intention, not an architectural one, so the architects can only provide the programed areas for such activities to take place. It is the ensemble of areas – kitchen, dining common,

community meeting, entry court, and outdoor gardens – that demonstrates an architectural understanding of a model agrarian community.

The school also encourages a regional identity rather than national identity by emphasizing ecological differences instead of political ones. The zoning of the building reflects the various ecological zones found in Virginia. Each grade level, from K-5 is associated with a particular habitat: mountains (kindergarten), forests (1st Grade), prairies (2nd Grade), wetlands (3rd Grade), rivers (4th Grade), and oceans (5th Grade); zones in the primary school are terrestrial habitats and those in the elementary school are aquatic. The educational intention for this zoning is to help students observe distinction in habitats but to do so relies considerably on signage. The limitation is that the students are not as direct in participating with the architecture in order to understand the environment around them. VMDO's design still separates the outdoor ecology and the indoor environment, despite their intentions, to a greater degree than Neutra's schools.

Limits of Agrarianism in Architecture

There are instances where agrarianism with regional concerns productively interacts with modernism's approach to a universal aesthetic. However, it should be pointed out that architecturally there are significant limitations. VMDO's design, for example, uses signage and a kitchen laboratories which are not themselves architectural. The former is a text just as with one would read out of a science textbook the latter is a scientific lab for experimentation where the architecture merely allocates areas for those activities. Yet the façade and drainage system for the school are architectural features contributing to the understanding of the land by representing a cross section of soil stratification through material artifice. In Neutra's school, all the necessary services are part of the ensemble for the community centre and its relationship to agriculture and education, aspiring towards a Jeffersonian vision of a rural town. However, the school was never built and remained an ideal. Neutra himself would design a number of schools following his 1944 proposal while experimenting with the new building materials and technologies he questioned in writing earlier in his career.

Thus agrarianism is not an absolute ideology to strictly follow when designing a rural building, but its underlying precepts have a persistent enough value to consider the degrees in which people engage buildings the way farmers engage the soil. Agrarian ideology has changed over time, from Jefferson's yeoman farmer as the standard of citizenship to VMDO's ecological stewardship of the land, but the persistent principles are our relationship to the ground and how we engage the world around us, not as contrasting entities, but as participants in regional settings with a national citizenship.

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I. M. PEI'S MUSEUM FOR CHINESE ART, SHANGHAI, 1946
Modernism, regionalism and the search for an architectural representation of national identity

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Abstract

My paper looks into the Chinese American architect I. M. Pei's first museum project, the Museum for Chinese Art, Shanghai, conceived as his answer to an architectural representation of national identity in 1946. Although Pei's project is envisaged for China, I consider it to be a key example that intervenes in the debate between modernism and regionalism in America in the 1940s.
In February 1948, the Progressive Architecture published in its latest issue Pei's graduation project at Harvard Graduate School of Design, finished under the supervision of Walter Gropius. Though unrealised, the design is highly acknowledged in the P/A as a monumental piece of modern museum. The scheme suggests an extremely modernist statement, combined with the theme of a traditional Chinese garden. While the P/A article well presents its modernist vocabulary through architectural plans and close-up photos of the model, the project's equal consideration of representing local characteristics has not been fully recognised.
My paper argues how Pei's design introduces an architectural representation of national identity through the means of architectural regionalism, apart from its testimony to the canon of modern architecture. In my paper, I will briefly delve into the context of architectural debates between modernism and regionalism in America in the 1940s, and then identify the project's representation of local elements as a reflection of regional characteristics. Evidence is seen from the fact that Pei intends his museum for a very specific location, the unfinished urban plan of the Civic Centre in the Jiangwan District of Shanghai in 1933, along with the project's emphasis on characteristic language of the Chinese garden. Placing itself in a Chinese context, Pei's design offers a distant but alternative view towards understanding the conception of architectural modernism and modernity for American audience

Keywords: Max Modernism, modern architecture, regionalism, nationalism

In February 1948, the American magazine *Progressive Architecture* presented a museum designed by the Chinese-American architect, I. M. Pei (Figure 1). Titled "Museum for Chinese Art, Shanghai," this was Pei's graduate work at Harvard Graduate School of Design, finished under the supervision of Walter Gropius two

years before. It envisages a Chinese art museum to be located in China, through a typically modern structure that is integrated with a theme of the traditional Chinese garden.

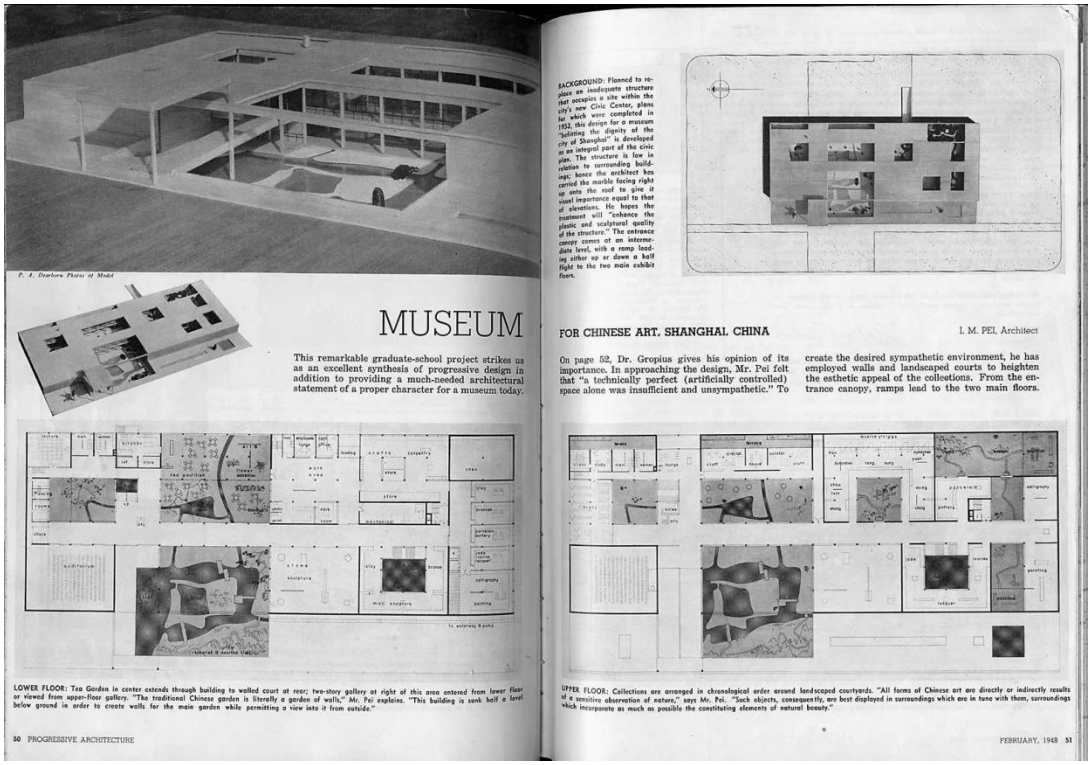


Figure 1. "Museum for Chinese Art, Shanghai, China," *Progressive Architecture*, 28 February (1948), 50–1.

The editor's acknowledgment of the modernist credentials of the design is seen from the use of a large-sized word MUSEUM in the title to emphasise the function of building. This is immediately followed by an enthusiastic opening remark, which says,

> This remarkable graduate-school project strikes us as an excellent synthesis of progressive design in addition to providing a much-needed architectural statement of a proper character for a museum today. (*Progressive Architecture*, 1948, p. 50)

This article introduces Pei's design through images of the architectural model and the plan, along with some descriptions provided by Pei. It also provides a review by Gropius (1948: 52), which explains how Pei, through the themes of '*the bare Chinese wall' and the 'small individual garden patio'*, the '*two eternal features' of Chinese architecture, achieved 'a modern architectural expression on a monumental level*.' Overall, a look at the form and structure of the design immediately reveal its modernist credentials. But meanwhile, I consider it also conveys a strong reference to Chinese culture and a specific concept of national identity that thus challenges the universal standards of modern architecture, and in particular, the so-called International Style. Especially in the context of 1940s America, this Museum for Chinese Art has interestingly combined a testimony to the canon of modern architecture with a representation of national identity through an emphasis on architectural regionalism.

I. M. Pei, Museum for Chinese Art, 1946

The presentation of Pei's project in the article offers the starting point to read the building. The first image is a photo of the architectural model, covering almost half the first page. It presents a distinctive look of the very modernist characters in Pei's design, with elements that remind viewers of Le Corbusier's Five Points on Architecture (Le Corbusier, 1926). The entrance is covered by a modern portico and it connects to a modernist slope leading to the open interior of the courtyard. Two more photos present the overall look of the model.[1] One is next to the caption; the other is on the top of the next page. It is visible that Pei has envisaged a flat-roofed cubic structure, with many openings asymmetrically arranged to reveal the internal garden as a main feature of the building. There is a short description that tells (1948: 51) how the museum, '*befitting the dignity of Shanghai*,' is intended to replace an '*inadequate structure*' in the Civic Centre, the plan of which was finished in 1933. It envisions a two-story gallery space

[1] The close-up view shows a combination of columns and a flat roof. The absence of supporting walls provides a view of the open space of the interior that the free plan independent from the structural function of the supporting *pilotis*. This perspective almost creates a visual effect that the *pilotis*, seen through the openings of the ceiling, are transformed into mullions of the horizontal windows of the building.

built in concrete. The structure is designed to be half beneath the ground, thus the building surface is entirely covered by marble so as to eliminate the disadvantage of its lower height comparing to surrounding buildings, while also help '*enhance the plastic and sculptural quality of the structure*.'[2]

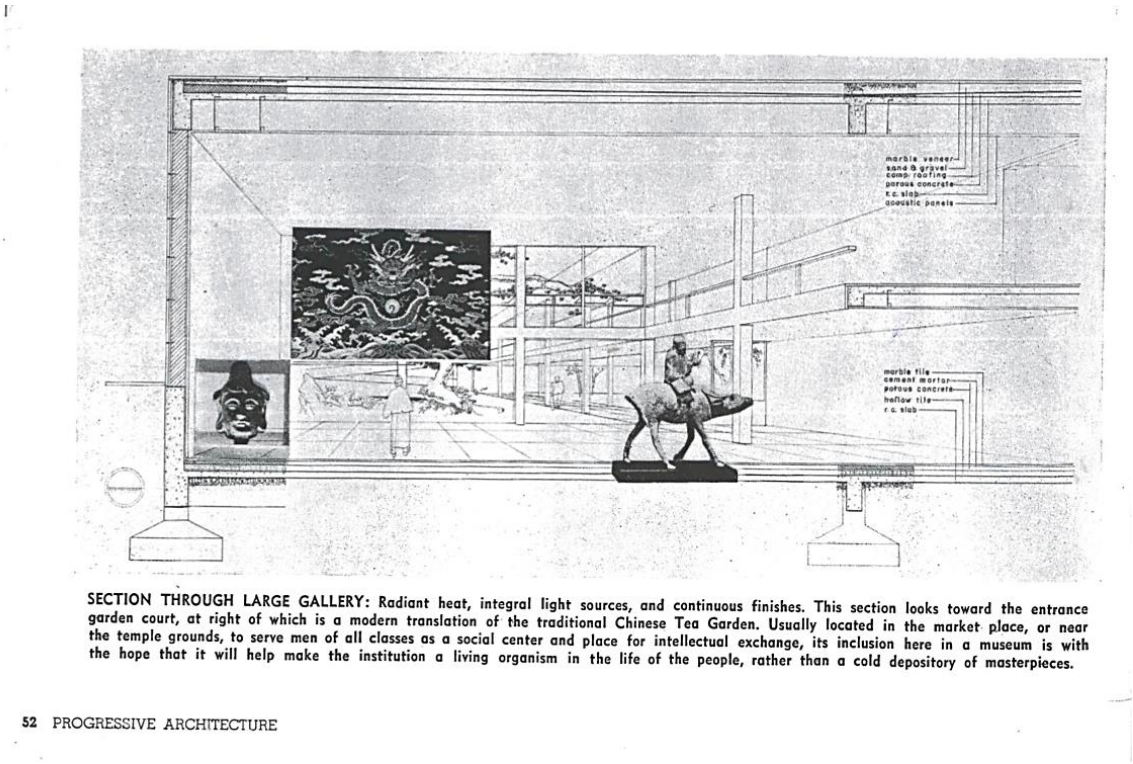
The architectural plan of the museum presents the layout of the inner galleries, along with short descriptions for each floor. The Lower Floor underground featured a Chinese garden, extending the museum space from the centre to the walled courtyard located at the rear end of the building. Pei (1948: 50) gives an account of the philosophy behind this spatial construction, '*the traditional Chinese garden is literally a garden of walls*.' Pei (1948: 50) further explains how '*this building is sunk half a level below ground in order to create walls for the main garden while permitting a view into it from outside*.'

The plan of the Upper Floor gives an idea of how the exhibiting rooms are arranged by collection type, such as bronze, clay, painting and calligraphy. Items in each room are then displayed in a chronological order. The Chinese garden partitions, while also connecting, the inner galleries. Natural elements such as lotus, bamboos and flowers are scattered around the garden and the tea pavilion. As Pei (1948: 50) considers, this arrangement would help the collections to be '*best displayed in surroundings which are in tune with them, surroundings which incorporate as much as possible the constituting elements of natural beauty*.' Pei (1948: 51) further explains his arrangement in a non-modernist manner that '*all forms of Chinese art are directly or indirectly results of a sensitive observation of nature*.'

The section provides a view of the functional construction of the internal gallery space looking through the two-story structure and the Chinese garden (Figure 2). It shows how the gallery is an open space across the upper and lower levels of the building, connected both to the courtyard of the museum and the long corridor. On view are three iconic Chinese objects that manifest an emphasis on Chinese characteristics. The bottom left of the section features a bronze Buddha bust, to the right of which is a statue of a Chinese philosophical figure riding a

[2] The placement of the floor level beneath the ground was later best-known in Mies's design of the Neue Nationalgalerie.

buffalo. In the background of the section can be seen a large embroidery of a Chinese dragon that creates a spatial division from the ceiling. Rather than simply being displayed as artworks, these objects create an impression as if being designed as part of the space.[3] The construction materials specified in the section, such as marble veneer, sand and concrete consolidated on a slab and installed on the ceiling, evince the sense of modernity and firmness Pei intended for his building.



SECTION THROUGH LARGE GALLERY: Radiant heat, integral light sources, and continuous finishes. This section looks toward the entrance garden court, at right of which is a modern translation of the traditional Chinese Tea Garden. Usually located in the market place, or near the temple grounds, to serve men of all classes as a social center and place for intellectual exchange, its inclusion here in a museum is with the hope that it will help make the institution a living organism in the life of the people, rather than a cold depository of masterpieces.

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Figure 2. Section Plan, "Museum for Chinese Art, Shanghai, China," *Progressive Architecture*, 28 February (1948), 52.

Below the floor plan, a short description explains that this very specific installation of the Tea Garden is a feature usually situated either in a market as a social place for people of different classes, or around temple architecture as a venue for intellectual conversation. Pei (1948: 52) suggests the Tea Garden

[3] The figures beneath the embroidery and at the far end of the aisle (the next exhibiting room), in traditional Chinese outfits, give an idea of the scale and height of the structure and the connectedness of the internal space.

refers to teahouses in Chinese culture, which helps make his museum '*a living organism in the life of the people, rather than a cold depository of masterpieces*.' Overall, both the multiple displays of objects originate from Chinese culture and the building's connection to the Chinese garden contribute to a representation of Chinese symbolism.

Mies van der Rohe, Museum for a Small City

The project's modernist credentials are visible from a clear resemblance to Mies van der Rohe's scheme for a 'Museum for a Small City,' which thus reveals Pei's intentional modelling on a Western modernist prototype (Figure 3) (Conrad, 2001, 3–4). In 1943, two American magazines, *Architectural Forum* and *Fortune*, invited twenty-three architects, including Louis Kahn and Mies, to envisage an ideal city in post-war America named "architecture of 194x" (Ozler, 2011; Lambert, 2001, 426–9).[4] Each architect was responsible for different segments of infrastructure, including, for instance, library, city hall, museum and office buildings, all of which contributed to creating a new image of community life and urban planning (Ozler, 2011).[5] Mies's proposal came out as a practical and ideal museum space for the enjoyment of the community. This is realised, as Mies (1943: 84) states, through the design of the garden in the centre of the building to eliminate '*the barrier between the art work and the living community' in 'a noble background for the civic and cultural life*.'

It is not difficult to identify how the two projects resemble a familiarity not only in terms of design philosophy, but also in aspects of structure, materials and the formation of space. Pei's emphasis on the socialising and entertaining purpose of his tea pavilion, built for people of different classes, echoes what Mies suggested

[4] The prototype of this ideal city was Syracuse, New York. Mies's museum design was inspired by the thesis project of George Danforth, one of his students at IIT. Mies's museum design reflected his previous interest in the composition of "continuous floor and roof planes leading to an open horizon." As it can be noticed from the illustration, Danforth also delineated the drawings of the design. Ozler, L. (July 4, 2011).

[5] In the realistic context of American architecture, Mies's scheme came out when museum architecture had not yet fully begun to thrive, as Barry Bergdoll (2009, 107–123) recognised the museum boom in America only came in the 1960s.

as creating a cultural background shared by the whole community.[6] The section of Pei's large gallery conveys a visual equivalence to the interior that Mies created, which indicates a similar spatial composition and the use of artworks as part of the architectural space.[7] Finally, the emphasis on constructing technique and materials also suggests how Pei's modelling on the Museum for the Small City has in a way responded to this modernist and post-war American architectural identity that Mies presented through his steel framed museum structure.[8]

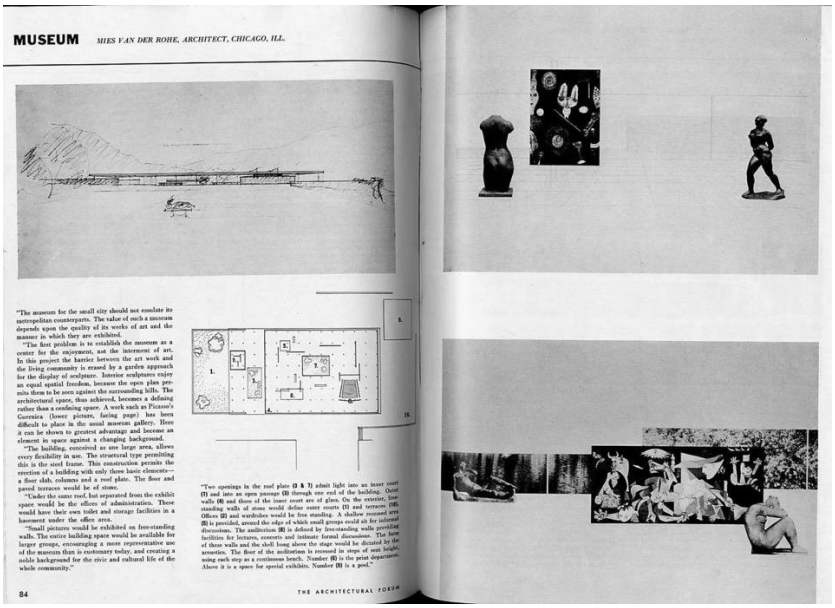

Figure 3. Museum for the Small City, Mies van der Rohe," *The Architecture Forum*, May (1943), 84–85.

[6] To achieve this connection with the entire community, Pei develops his scheme around the theme of the central courtyard, while Mies also positioned a garden as a primary element to bridge the gap between artworks and visitors from both aesthetic and cultural considerations. In his gallery design, Mies presented an open space, composed by the modernist elements of a floor slab and a roof plate. The structure is supported by steel roof trusses that minimise the use of columns. Pei's detailed descriptions of the materials of the slabs for his roofed structure, supported by the main frame, the plinths of which suggested its role as the main columns of the building, nevertheless conveyed a similar idea of modern materials to create a large and free space for exhibiting uses and for a large group.

[7] Mies specifically suggests the extra function of Picasso's Guernica as part of the spatial structure as a freestanding wall that divides the space.

[8] The Museum for the Small City reasonably corresponds to the architectural background of post-war American city construction. The use of the steel technique, widely demonstrates in other projects of Mies in Chicago, is a recognition of the American steel industry that nevertheless echoes with the sense of American identity that Mies obtained since he left Germany. The open and flowing space of the Museum for a Small City was also realised through the application of the steel frame, which therefore corresponded to the architectural context of the post-war American city of the 194x.

The affinity between Pei's design and Mies's envisaged museum explains the progressive and modernist attributes of Pei's design. By blending the modernist form with the theme of a Chinese garden, Pei presents a potential of modernism to develop its language in a Chinese context. This celebration of the modernist prospects of Pei's museum, however, in a way underestimates the regional context Pei experimented with in his design. In fact, one aspect to consider when it comes to Pei's modernist identity is that his search for an architectural expression of a national identity was also a question discussed in America throughout the 1940s.

The search for American regionalism

The Museum of Modern Art was a focus of this prolonged debate on regionalism and modernism. This started from the first architectural exhibition in MoMA in 1932. Entitled *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, it introduced the International Style as the new aesthetics to follow in the development of modern architecture. The principles included the use of modern structure and materials in architectural planning, the emphasis on volume instead of mass of a building, the regular layout of architectural form and proportion, with flexibility in floor planning and, last but not least, the elimination of ornament or decorative pattern in the design (Barr, 1932, 12–17).

While the International Style became a way to celebrate modern identity of America, the years between 1934 and 1945 witnessed a prominence of regional characteristics in American architecture, as have been examined by Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis (Lefaivre, 2003, 44). This was first coined with the 1945 MoMA exhibition *Built in USA: 1932–44* (Mock, 1932). In the exhibition catalogue, Philip Goodwin (1945: 5), then Chairman of the Architecture Committee of MoMA, suggested that the International Style was of '*foreign*' influence, whereas the regional architecture was more a reflection of '*an*

authentic modern American style.'[9] This resistance against modernism was further expressed by curator of the exhibition, Elizabeth Mock, who perceived regional structures, with emphases on traditional or local materials, creative forms, meeting individual needs in their architectural settings, have offered a contemporary direction to develop American architectural modernity which departs from European modernism of the 1920s (Lefaivre, 2003, 25; Mock 1945).[10]

In the same year, Sigfried Giedion, then appointed professor at the GSD, published *Nine Points on Monumentality* that called for a modern version of architectural monumentality to accord with new city planning. In contrast, Lewis Mumford criticised Giedion's new monumentality and identified the Bay Region style of the San Franciscan architects as a native form of American modernism in contrast to the European-oriented International Style (Lefaivre, 2003, 25). This was then connected to a round table discussion on "What is happening to Modern Architecture?" in the MoMA to address the tension between the International Style and the Bay Region architecture in February 1948 (Barr et al., 1948).[11]

My point of mentioning this complicated ongoing process of identifying a modern solution to represent American national and architectural identity is that it must have exerted certain influence on Pei.[12] As Pei's biographer Carter Wiseman (2001: 44) notes, when Pei was working on his graduation project, Pei was also looking for a '*regional or "national" expression in architecture*. Reflected in his design of the Museum for Chinese Art, this search for a national and regional architectural expression concerns with a specific historical context, which

[9] Goodwin was also the co-designer of the museum.
[10] Before the exhibition, Mock had already openly criticised the International Style as the rigid European modernism that limited the various manifestation of American modernity. Typical examples of regional architecture enlisted in the exhibition included Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Water and the wooden superstructure, House for Chamberlain, designed by Gropius and Breuer.
[11] The roundtable was held in MoMA in Feb 1948. In 1952, Hitchcock and Arthur Drexler adopted the name of Mock's exhibition for *Built in USA: Post-war Architecture*, to reclaim the sovereignty of modern architecture and the International Style. The debate over architectural style and criticism on all of labels of shift-isms only progressed to a more complicated degree, followed by the rivalry between modern and postmodern architecture in the 1960s.
[12] As Barry Bergdoll notes (Bergdoll, 2003, 260–306), Gropius and Breuer were also searching for a regional architectural language, experimented through New England architecture. This might suggest a more direct influence on Pei.

suggests how the work can be read from an entirely different perspective. This reading is concerned with a Chinese context of constructing new architecture that ran in a parallel course to that of Western modernism, as I will explain now.

The Greater Shanghai Plan

As mentioned before, Pei (1948: 51) intended his museum '*to replace an inadequate structure*' in the city's new Civic Centre planned in 1933. The Civic Centre Pei referred to was part of a large-scale urban planning project during 1929-1937, entitled The Greater Shanghai Plan. It was initiated by the Chinese Nationalist Party (which was the rival of the Communist Party until 1949), for the purpose to transform the current image of the city. In the 1930s, Shanghai was partly dominated by the prosperity of British and American International Settlement and French Concession, while also experiencing the underdevelopment of the old Chinese city. The purpose of the Greater Shanghai Plan was to develop a brand-new, Chinese-built image of the metropolis (Macpherson, 1990, 39-62).

In a way, this constructing context is also analogous to the setting of the "architecture of 194x," where Mies developed his Museum for a Small City, as they both propose a utopian and ideal outlook of a post-war urban landscape. The Greater Shanghai Plan started with the planning of an undeveloped area in the Jiangwan District in the northeast of the city. This construction would lead to future urban planning of residential, commercial and industrial zones equipped with transportation and infrastructure, including port, main road and railway system in the new City of Shanghai. Besides recruiting Chinese professionals, the City Planning Commission also consulted American urban planning and engineering experts on the location of the new city, trading ports and railways (Ping, 1999, 70-6). The Civic Centre was the focus of the Greater Shanghai Plan. Presented in a cruciform design, it was envisaged to accommodate the main administrative and public buildings. The most essential construction was the Mayor's Building, surrounded by the city museum, the library, an auditorium, an art gallery and civic courts.

A key aspect to be considered is the architectural style of these buildings. This was specified to be the "Chinese Renaissance Style" that integrated Western techniques with Chinese architectural traditions (Dong, 1935, 105-6; Macpherson, 1990, 54).[13] In the course of political expansion of the KMT, this so-called the "Chinese Renaissance Style" has been gradually fashioned as an architectural statement of the Nationalist government, which related to their architectural representation of nationalism and national identity. In the Civic Centre of the Greater Shanghai Plan, this was firstly and mostly strongly represented in the Mayor's Building (1931). It features a reinforced concrete four-story structure and a large gabled roof typical of Chinese imperial architecture, with lavish decorations on the exterior such as painted columns and carved totems (Campanella, 2008, 66). Subsequent buildings of the architectural complex, including the city museum, the city library and especially, the aeroplane-shaped Aviation Association building, all built in 1934-35, witnessed a gradual transition in the Style towards a greater involvement with modern elements rather than Chinese ornamentation (Lai, 2006, 202). However, traditional decorations both on the exterior and interior of the monumental buildings were still retained as an essential feature.

Though the exact site on which Pei intended to place his museum was not specified, it is evident that he a challenge to the architectural language of the Chinese Renaissance Style. As suggested by Gropius suggests (1948: 52) in his review, the main concern was '*to avoid having Chinese motifs of former periods added to public buildings in a rather superficial way as was done for many public buildings in Shanghai.*' This reasonably relates difficult to the features perceived from the Chinese Renaissance Style. By using the very specific theme of the Chinese garden, Pei installed bare walls that would be considered typically Chinese, while refraining from the colour and ornamentation of imperial architecture. Pei's nonconformity to the architectural representation of Chinese

[13] The term initially came from the "adaptability of Chinese architecture" or a "Chinese architectural renaissance," an integration of Western techniques with Chinese traditional styles greatly promoted by American architect Henry Killam Murphy. This was then followed by collaborations with the Nationalist Government for urban planning in Guangzhou and Nanjing, among which was the mapping out of the Capital Plan of Nanjing during 1927-1930 (Cody, 2001, 182-197). The main architect of the Greater Shanghai Plan was Dong Dayou (Dayu Doon).

culture and identity thus offers an alternative vocabulary of the existing architectural forms in the Civic Centre, and meanwhile resonates with the language of "whiteness" in American and European modernism.

Conclusion

The readings of the project in the American post-war context and its envisaged Chinese setting thus leads to my understanding of Pei's strategy in representing national identity, in which the celebration of the so-called modern architecture might not have necessarily be the capitalised International Modernism. Rather, it is a complicated, plural and integrated form which is difficult to define, one which also incorporates consideration of regional or native characteristics. The Museum for Chinese Art thus reflects Pei's quest for an expression of Chinese national and cultural identity offers a more diverse employment of regional and modern that blurs the boundaries between regional and Modernist identities. Looking back on the development of architectural debates on modernism and regionalism in America in the 1940s, the formation of Pei's architectural concept can also be seen as an integration of changed architectural styles in America that particularly links to the representation of national identity.

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ROMANTIC VISIONS *vs.* REJECTION OF IDEAL RECONSTRUCTION

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Abstract

Almost half a century after Romanticist fervor dwindled, a highly distinguished Serbian architect and architectural historian, Aleksandar Deroko, infused it with new life in his theoretical and design oeuvre. Significantly contributing to the history of 20th century architecture in former Yugoslavia, Deroko merged romanticist deep appreciation of history with the rationality of modern design methodology. Rastko Petrovic, a Serbian poet, diplomat, and art critic was Deroko's faithful companion during his theoretical wanderings and ventures to the remote parts of the Balkans. The architect and the poet were both children of their own age. They personally knew Guillaume Apollinaire, James Joyce, Picasso, and were close to the Parisian Dadaist circle. On the other side, their approach to the study of the past deeply resonated with a romantic sentiment. Deroko's particular methodological approach to architectural history and design was based on the deep understanding of tradition and on supposition that it is possible to accumulate knowledge of the elements of good design.

This paper employs the example of the Church of Saint Sava in Belgrade, one of the largest Orthodox churches in the world, to explore the relations between Deroko's romantic visions and ways of using tradition in the construction of modernity. Furthermore, the role Petrovic's ideas played in development of Deroko's design methodology will be examined. The writer's novels and their content will be discussed to explain the union of romantic vision of remote, unapproachable medieval monasteries, with strong rationalism and realism in approach to preservation and protection of historical monuments. The paper will investigate contemporaneity of an argument that Deroko's methodological approach to architectural history does not recognize innovation as a virtue, and raises the question that each epoch is characterized by a complex set of conflicting and harmonizing tendencies simultaneously.

Keywords: Between History and Avant-Garde, Aleksandar Deroko, Rastko Petrovic, Saint Sava's Church.

Introduction

Set in the years between the two World Wars, this paper tells a story about three protagonists. The first protagonist was an architect – widely appreciated, yet overlooked. The second one was a poet – an avant-garde author in love with the past. The third was a building – an edifice seminal within the context of a nation's tradition, yet widely criticised as anachronistic. The story takes place in Belgrade, the capital city of a complex socio-political entity, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, better known under the name it officially carried since 1929 – the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The complex, contrasted natures of the three protagonists illustrate the broader circumstances of the interwar period. The architect, the poet, and the building were genuine children of their time, yet, caught between the siren call of history and the demands of the *Zeitgeist*, they belonged to none. However, looking back, the accomplishments of the three shine bright on the horizon of Serbian creative history. The work and wide contributions of the architect, Aleksandar Deroko (1894-1988), have gained traction recently; the poet, Rastko Petrović (1898-1949), is recognized as a prominent member of Serbian interwar intelligentsia; and the building, the Church of Saint Sava, is considered as one of the important symbols of Serbian national identity, and amongst the most striking architectural features of Belgrade.

Addressing the dual natures of Aleksandar Deroko, Rastko Petrović, and the architecture of the Church of Saint Sava, the paper explores the ambiguous understanding of the history and modernity in the interwar period. The Church of Saint Sava is a major topic from 20th century Serbian architectural history, and as such, it has attracted scholarly attention (Pesic, 2005). This paper is the first to explore the influence Petrović and Deroko's relationship, as well as the influence of their individual approaches to the questions of history and modernity had on the architecture of the Saint Sava's Church. In response to the conference topic, the paper will discuss the architecture of Saint Sava's Church in the context of conflicting notions of the architect's romantic visions of the past, his rejection of ideal reconstruction, and his functionalist approach to design. Finally, exploring the period's debate on the designs for the Saint Sava's

Church the paper will illustrate the duality of the local acceptance of the architecture of the Modern Movement.

Caught between History and Avant-Garde: Aleksandar Deroko and Ratsko Petrovic

First, to introduce the Architect and the Poet. Aleksandar Deroko was a prolific character from Serbian architectural history (Manevic, 2008; Bogunovic, 2005; Jovanovic, 1991; Korac, 1991; Medakovic, 1988; Bogdanovic, 1981). Architect, scholar, University lecturer, heritage worker, painter – to name only some of his interests – Deroko's achievements were imprinted on Serbian 20th century architecture. His active nature, inquisitive mind, and unpretentiousness resulted in a unique charisma that was adored by the students and respected by his peers. Rastko Petrović was a Serbian poet, writer, diplomat, literary and art critic. Having survived the Albanian Golgotha – the retreat of the Serbian army and a great number of civilians before the German, Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian armies in the First World War – at the age of seventeen, Petrović graduated from high school in Nice, and studied law in France. He is considered to be one of the most important and most influential Serbian writers in the period between the two World Wars.

Rastko Petrović was occupied with the stories of origin, with the Slavdom, its mythology and first sources of Serbian culture and art and his first books clearly show this obsession. He was a poet of strong Dionysian sense of life, moving between excruciating and devastating extremes - from the cheerful, sensual dissolution of the Slavic pagan paradise in *Burlesque of the God Perun* (Petrovic, 1921) full of eroticism, love, and free love - to the dark atmosphere of destruction, violence and death in some poems of *Revelation* (Petrovic, 1922). In the world of old Slavs - Rastko's permanent obsession, in Serbian folklore and in Serbian medieval art and literature - he sought for sources for Serbian autochthonous poetic reconstruction. His tendency for the synthesis between modernity and tradition and the cosmopolitan and national spirit was unseen and extremely brave.

Deroko and Petrović met in 1919. Deroko notes the encounter fondly in his autobiography:

> "We met on his return to Belgrade, after the World War I and Rastko's studies in Paris. He came from Paris thrilled by the legends of ancient Slavs … and the vision of medieval Serbian art not only in terms of architecture and fresco painting, but also of the old literature, poetry, folklore epics ... as well as everything inherited, recorded and preserved until today through stories, fairy tales, songs, costumes, jewellery. Rastko studied with enthusiasm medieval Serbian art with Professor Gabriel Millet in Paris ... and he wrote at that time *Burlesque of the God Perun*. I was in similar mood at that time. I was also obsessed with the magic of the old art ... Soon the two of us together eagerly went to see and experience it all close up." (Deroko, 1983, 2013; pp. 128-9)

Together, Rastko and Deroko travelled "for hours through the mountains and the waters," roaming the massifs of Serbia in search of the hidden monasteries. The two meticulously documented every detail from the monuments of the past. However, their interest in these edifices went beyond archaeological fascination. Believing that it was the only way to "really experience," they would always spend the nights in a monastery, or behind the walls of an old fortification (Deroko, 1983, 2013). Rastko and Deroko would sit in the darkness of these ancient buildings for hours, silent, immersed in an ecstatic experience of the past. Looking back at these years, Deroko notes that, at that time, the two truly believed that they did not create art, but only experienced ecstasy, asserting that it was the emotion that was important, not the art! (Deroko, 1983, 2013). The introspective contemplations of history, and the conversations held "in those darkened walls of their past," influenced them both, leaving a specific mark on their creative work.

Figure 1. Aleksandar Deroko and Rastko Petrovic, two friends drawing each other under the Petrova Church. (Popovic, R. (1984). *Deroko i drugi o njemu*. Beograd: Turisticka stampa, p. 37).

In the second half of the 1920s Deroko and Rastko replaced the wanderings across the isolated wilderness of Serbia with the bustling streets of Paris. Graduating from the School of Architecture at the University of Belgrade, Deroko was awarded the French national scholarship. He arrived in Paris in 1926 to study under Professor Gabriel Millet at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes* (Deroko, 1983, 2013). Rastko was already there to greet Deroko and introduce him to the very core of the Parisian avant-garde, discussing Surrealism, Dadaism, and other progressive concepts with Charles Despiau, Maurice de Vlaminck, Pablo Picasso, and Le Corbusier (Deroko, 1983). In the time to come, Deroko wrote at length about their time in Paris. The two visited Parisian museums regularly, passionately and tirelessly. They did not desire to see everything, but only the pieces worth the experience, since "being excited" and discovering the artist's intention were of the utmost importance to them (Deroko, 1983, 2013).

Recalling the memories of his dearest friend at that time, Deroko noted that while their Parisian company was drawing a moustache on Mona Lisa, Rastko preferred the great masters of the past. Though the poet had a deep appreciation of modern art, he preferred Ingres. Rastko was devoted to the classic values of art, without desire to experiment with oddities that ruled over Fine Arts at that time (Deroko, 1983; 1987, 2014). The same tendencies were visible in Deroko's designs.

Romantic Visions versus Rejection of Ideal Reconstruction: Ambiguity behind Deroko's Design Activity

Sharing in Rastko's obsession with the past, Deroko was passionately involved in the preservation of architectural heritage. From the very beginning of his career, he put his life in the service of heritage protection (Deroko, 1987, 2014; Deroko, 1932): taking a theoretically developed methodological approach to heritage problems (Deroko, 1987, 2014; Deroko, 1933; Deroko, 1932); discussing preservation techniques; and contributing to the education in the field of heritage protection. As a student, Deroko was a member of expeditions surveying the rich, often uncharted architectural heritage of Serbia. "Not a path, nor a smaller pathway to the monastery" was an unavoidable feature of these field trips, or better, field adventures. For example, to reach a monastery from a town or a city, they would often travel by a simple timber carriage to the nearest village. The rest of the distance had to be covered on foot, jumping over the wooden fences between the estates – which was often frowned upon by the owners (Deroko, 1987, 2014). Finally arriving on a site, they did not have any adequate equipment at their disposal. However, despite all the difficulties, these expeditions collected a lot of important data. Discussing the choice between restoration or conservation, Deroko maintained that Viollet le Duc "ruined Avignon". Deroko asserted that there was no simple solution to this problem. However, in the case of Serbian medieval cities he insisted that attempting to reconstruct completely what was destroyed would be wrong: "What does not exist anymore, even if it is known exactly what it looked like, still should not be

reconstructed again. The best is to preserve what still exists and protect that from further deterioration." (Deroko, 1950, p. 206).

Deroko's deep appreciation of history and a pragmatic approach to heritage issues permeated his design philosophy. Often stressing the necessity to respect a certain past epoch and its heritage, Deroko believed in learning from architectural history. Deroko called on architects to appreciate their past, underlining that history should be neither forgotten nor rejected. Cultural heritage should serve as an inspiration, as a refreshment, or as an encouragement to the poetic idea with its naivety and deep sensibility. However, Deroko insisted that the architectural past should never serve as a source of direct imitation! (Deroko, 1987; 2014). Well aware of contemporary Modernist achievements, and personally acquainted with Le Corbusier, Deroko remained unconvinced by their rhetoric. Like the Modernists, Deroko believed in ethical categories, such as architectural honesty. However, he asserted that art need not progress. According to him, instead of the pursuit of progress in architecture there should be just different ways of expression and different values (Deroko, 1987, 2014). And, in Deroko's mind, there was hardly a greater value in architecture than function. He maintained that vernacular architecture was an archetype of functionality, a result of a specific set of geographical and climatic conditions. Deroko remained highly critical of the Modernist use of standardized elements regardless of the building's conditions. Deroko's was a functionalist approach to design (Deroko, 1987, 2014). According to him, the role of an architect was to provide a quiet corner amid the general bustle of streets, squares, and "transport nodes". Interestingly, Deroko attempted to approach the contemporary architectural production from the point of the occupant – as a layman, not as a specialist, nor an urban planner. Though he stressed his belief in the necessity of artistic freedom and personal appreciation for modern art, Deroko often reminded his readers that the common people were the ones who inhabited the products of architecture and urbanism; they must look at them every day and every hour. With the motto "freedom is great, but so is the risk" Deroko insisted that architects do not own architecture (Deroko, 1987, 2014).

Similarly to the Modernist proponents, Deroko often discussed the concept of *Zeitgeist*. He advocated that a work of art inevitably expressed the epoch and society which produced it. However, a monument always tends to last long, possibly eternally (as, for example, the pyramids), so it must not be tied only to the ephemeral taste of the current fashion. According to Deroko, the principles of architectural functionality, stability and timelessness were closely associated with human existence. He often reiterated that the universal principles of functionality, harmony, stability, were in accordance with the fundamental objectives of any significant human creation. In every major culture they were selected as a means and a guarantee of social relations, peace and stability – and were recognizable manifestations of common moral as well. Respecting the purpose for which a building was constructed, the geographical conditions, and materials, Deroko maintained that "good taste" – perceived as "common sense" – was the basic condition for any work of art (Deroko, 1974; Deroko 1981; Deroko, 1983; Deroko, 1987, 2014). Deroko's recipe for good architecture would follow the scheme: successful idea – one that suits the purpose/fits the function - expressed with the right measure and good taste. As a result, great works of art are those which live even beyond their time, and remain relevant in all times (Deroko, 1987, 2014; 1985). Deroko occasionally mentioned the word "spirit" in the positive sense in his writings, obviously believing in spiritual continuum between different historical periods because this process has always been essential for vigour and inventiveness in architecture. He was never interested in a clear chronological classification of architecture, but in the basic characteristics of its development. This brings us to the conclusion that Deroko was advocating the "spirit" or "spirituality" in architecture which exists regardless of the time and place of its erection.

The Church of Saint Sava: The Debate

Stretching throughout the 20th century, the full history of the construction of the Saint Sava's Church remained an intricate narrative – one that, however, is of lesser importance for this paper. Relevant is the debate which arose following

the final decision to construct the building after unified designs by Bogdan Nestorovic and Aleksandar Deroko.[1] Published in the period's press, the opinions of noted architects and artists are a source for the exploration of various issues; for example, the complex questions of national identity which were an unavoidable consequence of the endeavour to construct a grand Serbian Orthodox structure in the capital of the heterogeneous multinational political society of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. However, in this paper, the focus is on the formal criticism of the architectural solution for the Saint Sava Church. Responding to the conditions put forward by the 1926 competition, architects Nestorovic and Deroko designed a centrally planned edifice, in the Serbian-Byzantine tradition. Shaped like a Greek cross, the structure is covered with a large central dome, supported by four pendentives and flanked on each side by a system of four smaller domes and lower semi-domes.

Figure 2. Deroko, Saint Sava Church, a centrally planned edifice in the Serbian-Byzantine tradition, competition drawing (Jovanovic, Z. (1991). *Aleksandar Deroko*. Beograd: RZZZSK, p. 66).

[1] Architect Bogdan Nestorovic won the first prize in the competition for the Church of Saint Sava design, held in 1926. Deroko also competed, and his design was also highly commended (and bought) by the Church of Saint Sava Construction Committee. In 1932 the Committee invited Nestorovic and Deroko to prepare a joint, final project. Deroko was primarily responsible for interior design and sculptural ornament.

The criticism of Modernist architects was sharp – they maintained that a new competition should be organised, one that would not set any stylistic demands. Architects such as Brasovan asserted that the Church design should employ novel architectural forms, ones that were expressive of today (Brasovan, 1932). Other were not as radical. The Krstic brothers and Zeljko Tatic recognised the need for the traditional architectural forms, yet they were uncertain of which precedents would be appropriate – the Byzantine, or those from the Serbian medieval repertoire (Krstic, 1932; Tatic, 1932). In his commentary on the designs, Ivan Mestrovic called for a Yugoslav national style (Mestrovic, 1932), and the famous architectural theorist Milutian Borisavljevic asserted that an international competition should be organised, given that a Serbian architecture had yet to be developed (Borisavljevic, 1932). No matter their various solutions to the problem – Modernist, traditionalist, or internationalist – it is obvious that these architects were unified in their dissatisfaction.

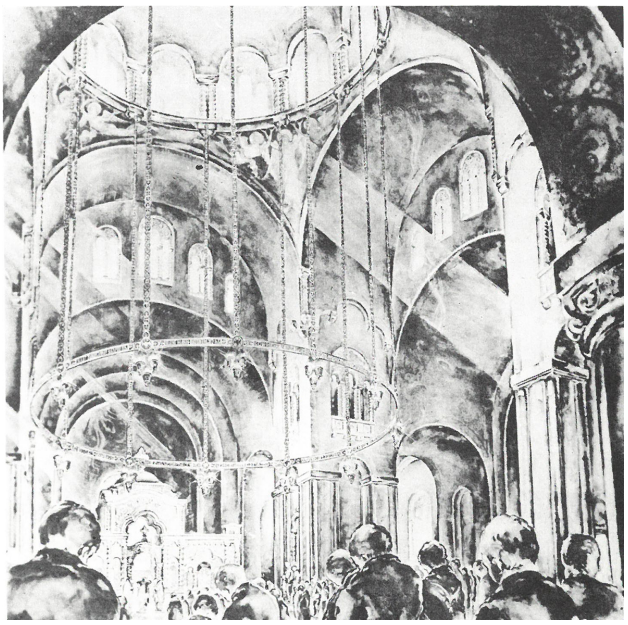

Figure 3. Deroko, Saint Sava Church, interior - a Greek cross covered with a large central dome, competition drawing (Jovanovic, Z. (1991). *Aleksandar Deroko*. Beograd: RZZZSK, p. 65).

The client, however; the layman that Deroko cared so dearly about – in this case, the Serbian Orthodox Church – loved the designs (Djuric, 1932; Serbian

Patriarch, 1932). The positive reactions by the patron stood the test of time. When the construction of the Church resumed in 1985-86 – after it had been interrupted by the Second World War and the dominant ideological position of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for decades – the designs by Nestorovic and Deroko were modified only slightly.[2] The building remains to this day one of the most imposing structures in Belgrade, and perhaps the grandest building erected for the Serbian Orthodox Church. Deroko noted that two guiding principles were followed in designs for the Church of Saint Sava – the imperative of functionality of planning, and the monumentality of space and form (Deroko, *Vreme*, 1933). Looking back at the start of construction, Deroko commented on the challenges of designing a functional space for 10.000 people, which was done with reference to the *Architects' Data,* the seminal handbook by Ernst Neufert. Deroko also noted information about the thirty meter diameter of the dome, making an obviously important comparison with the dome of St. Sophia in Constantinople. Although the size is not necessarily associated with monumentality in Deroko's opinion, the complete appearance and size of the St. Sava's church obviously were of utmost importance (Deroko, 1987; 2014). Responding to the 1932 criticism, Deroko asserted that the Modernist approach, with their demands of reductionist forms made of steel, concrete and glass, could not be even considered in relation to design of a monumental Orthodox church. Insisting that the rich tradition of sacred architecture must be taken into account when designing a building such as Saint Sava's Church, Deroko remained loyal to the idea of architectural purpose (Deroko, *Vreme*, 1932; Deroko, 1983, 2013).

[2] When the building of the church continued in 1985-86, most of its already accepted concept stayed the same; its architecture can be said to be from the years when the project was first approved and when the construction began. The decision to resume the construction of the church did not revive the debate of the 1930s.

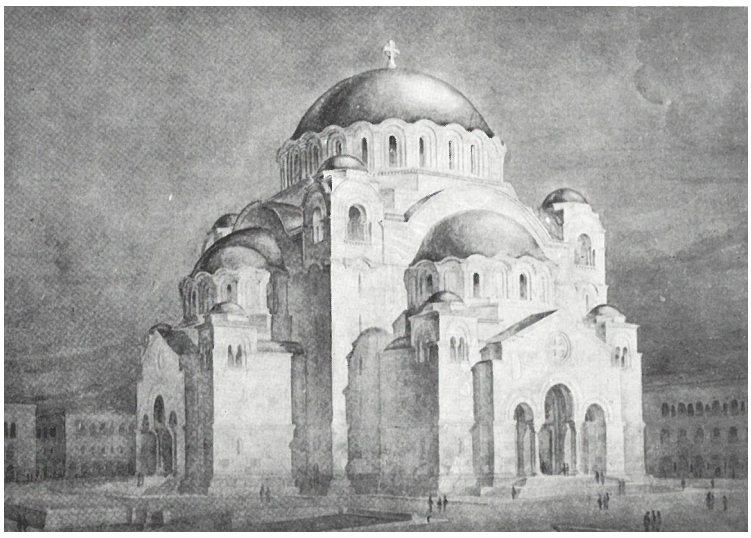

Figure 4. Nestorovic and Deroko, Saint Sava Church, final joint project (Jovanovic, Z. (1991). *Aleksandar Deroko*. Beograd: RZZZSK, p. 67).

Conclusion

Deroko's approach to architectural history – and design – was forged during the wanderings across the wilderness of Serbia. The ecstatic experience of past monuments, shared with his most trusted companion, the poet Rastko Petrovic, resulted in a special bond with architectural past. Rastko was inspired by ancient Slavic mythology, and his romantic visions of the history influenced Deroko. Deroko approached the history of architecture with a belief that it is possible to accumulate knowledge of the elements of good design. According to Deroko, there was much to be learned from past architectural experience. Deroko continually insisted that history should serve as a source of inspiration – not imitation, rejecting the notion of ideal reconstruction. He was interested in discovering the way anonymous builders of the past approached the process of design – how they understood the basic concepts of function, space, architectural details and the way they were modelled. Deroko passionately explored the formal qualities of historic buildings, trying to decipher their mutual influences and further transpositions.

A specific attitude toward history and historical periods, as well as the idea of the "spirit of the times" was a common thread in the writings and work of Aleksandar Deroko. It seems that Deroko did not believe in the idea that an architect, and an artist in general, should strive to an ideal progress, nor work under the direct command of "his time". He deeply believed in constant transformation of architecture, architectural elements and its details, independently of the previous ideas. However, these ideas were always present, since the beginning of this world, because humans simply learn from each other, correcting old mistakes and making new ones for next generations to correct. The idea that human nature can change so profoundly and transform over time that a man of one time is unrecognizable to a man from another time was obviously completely alien to him. In contrast to the majority of his contemporaries who accepted the Modernist ideas of a novel approach to architecture, while categorically rejecting any other, Deroko did not believe that any period can be simplified. Instead, he maintained that each epoch is characterised by a complex set of conflicting and harmonizing tendencies, acting simultaneously.

The rejection of ideal inspiration was visible in Deroko’s devotion to functionalist design solutions. Deroko’s design for the Church of Saint Sava supported the traditional principles of architecture, primarily related to the functionality and stability of buildings as a universal precondition for good architecture. Deroko did not recognize innovation as a virtue. Instead, he was interested in the pursuit of universal forms that are valid for all times. Deroko insisted on the lasting quality of architecture that goes beyond the lifetime of its builders. For Deroko it was important that architecture successfully meets the demands of construction in different political systems, cultures and geographic areas, standing the test of time as a "canon" that plays a real role in any culture and offers standards of excellence.

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THE PATIENT SEARCHING OF NEW FORMS OF LOCAL ARCHITECTURE
Micro-intervention as the strategy of preservation of *genius loci* in Grison

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Abstract

The research concerns methods of preservation of significant values of cultural landscape in the area of Grisons. These methods comprise both multi-stage urban planning regulations as well as ingenuity of architects focused on the development of local building traditions and protection of historical buildings. Architectural micro-interventions play an important function here. They limit excessive expansion of towns and villages and at the same time preserve the historical structures and development outline. The method of patient search for the right spatial and formal solutions has developed under the negotiatory nature of cooperation of the architects and the inhabitants and the perception of a commune as a client/investor. Thus, despite changes, any activities in the social and architectural spheres represent continued identification with a place. Confrontation of new trends, tendencies and ideology with strong and deeply felt tradition and environment deemed to be a significant value, verifies the assumptions of such new trends or tendencies, and in consequence adjusts or rejects them respectively. Changes are introduced on the condition that they are well thought of and blended with the historical and cultural continuum

Keywords: urban planning, commune, microintervention

Introduction

Architecture of Grisons, based on local traditions and identity, is at present undergoing changes, which mainly consist in the levelling of differences between town and village and in increased mobility driven by education, work and consumption. Population increase with simultaneous increase of the living standards is also important, this, in turn, generates an increase of scale and intensiveness of all the investments concerned. Harmonious introduction of modern architectural forms due to the development of architectural environment requires adoption of specified strategy targeted at defined goals falling from the

needs of an individual, a commune and the prevailing (universal) values such as culture and nature.

Figure 1. Cultural landscape of Lumnezia Valley. There are three layers which shape the communal feeling of identification with a place: dense development of the village (habitat), fields and pastures (areas of individual and common activities) and untouched natural landscape (spatial dominant). A great number of viewpoints at a different levels makes urban structures in Grisons visible from the 'bird eye's view', which facilitates the assessment of their composition, location of junctions etc. A particular approach to the roof geometry - as the fifth elevation – or to the landscape of roofs is enforced due to particular conditions. (source: author's photograph)

In case of Grisons, exceptional symbiosis of those values forms the cultural landscape (Heyd, 2002, p. 85-88, Lewicka, 2012, p. 37), which is under protection at the regional level as well as at the level of local authorities. The regional level planning is of general nature and is targeted at spatial planning, coordination of activities and promotion of sustainable, policentric development. Planning at the level of local authorities is more detailed and targeted at defined needs of local communities. A zoning plan (Nutzungsplan) - basic planning tool is to determine the manner of use of respective areas, to delimit land plots and areas designated for development and to determine the terms of financing infrastructure of respective services required for such development. What's

important, these plans also account for the requirements of the areas adjacent to the areas designated for the development and pay particular attention to the protection of cultural landscape.

Protected areas or areas particularly susceptible to changes are covered with the so-called *gestaltungplan* (also: *überbauungsordnung*, *bebauungsplan*), which can be drawn up for a single plot, and which plan in fact is a detailed elaboration of the zoning plan. Because of small scale of the majority of towns and villages in Grisons, it is a particularly useful planning instrument, which allows for a controlled development of a given town with an account for spatial, historical and cultural context. This development is not based on rapid transformation of wasteland or arable land into building plots, but rather on the use of limited resources in the open space.

In other words, urban planning of local self-governments is dominated with the tendency of using architectural **micro-interventions** instead of construction of large complexes of buildings or single, large-size buildings. In the urban scale, the main goal is to preserve historical building and the outline of the development, which is also connected with counteracting excessive sprawl of towns and villages. That's why, a small scale and a private house typology development are preferred[1].

Delicate presence of the tradition

Urban planning and architectural activities of the communes stem from tradition and pragmatism, they are, however, based on the ingenuity of the architects influenced by the plurality of buildings designed by Rudolf Olgiati, ideas of *invention and memory* propagated by Aldo Rossi and Italian neo-rationalists, in particular by La Tendenza movement. Swiss interpretation of Rossi's ideas, the so-called Ticinese School, and works created under their influence by Aurelio Galfetti and Bruno Reichlin and Fabio Reinhart (in particular, a fantastic Villa

[1] Despite high quality of space and architecture in Switzerland in general, certain errors have failed to be prevented e.g. erection of two 79 meter tower blocks in Chur (designed by Th. Domenig, 2009-2012). They are a clear dissonance in the landscape of the town and the natural landscape. Moreover, an increasing number of the so-called "second homes" is becoming a bigger and bigger problem (Clivaz, Nahrath, 2010).

Tonini, 1974) have become a significant stimulus for Swiss architects. A rather declarative continuation of local architecture has been transformed into the *patient search* for the right forms by such architects as Peter Zumthor, Valentin Bearth and Andrea Deplaze, Hans Jörg Ruch, Mierta and Kurt Lazzarini and many others.

All these architects use traditional architecture of Grisons with its irregularity and asymmetry of building volumes, strongly integrated with the topography and alpine climate. At the same time, a tendency of reduction of means of expressions as well as reduction of the influence of the new facility upon the existing development (which is under the protection, and so is the landscape, of a zoning plan of a commune, as such protection is its main task) can be observed. At the same time all historical buildings are protected irrespectively of their functions - representative, residential or business ones[2].

The formulation of entries in the *gestaltungplan* allows for their adaptation to individual needs, and the strategy of communes aimed at limiting new development, in fact, enforces the adaptation of the already existing buildings to new functions. Hans Jörg Ruch converted Clavo – a barn dating back to 1748 by introduction of an *inner shell* in-between the openwork walls. Thus the interior was divided without any interference to the outer structure. The new elements only show themselves in the form of the base plinth and the shoulder plate made of dark concrete linked with an extension constructed at the side of the barn. This *inner shell* can be viewed as an architectural implant (all its parts have been inserted through the roofing opening), whose tar coated surface *gets its daylight from the mystic light already shining through the openings between the timber logs and from one skylight, which brings light through a conical volume into the main floor* (Ruch, cited from: hhttps://www.ruch-arch.ch/index.php/en/clavo, access: 05.10.2017).

[2] Subtle transformations of historical buildings play an important function in the transformation of the cultural landscape. Tschudi's Gallery in Zuoz is nothing but a 13th century residential tower, reconstructed by H.J. Ruch. Its new functions are exposed only via a large glazed window situated just under the roof eaves. Similar transformations of the building functions can be observed in S-hanf (a gallery in Chesa Perini, designed by H.J. Ruch), Vnà (hotel designed by R. Furrer and Ch. Rösch) and Flims (Gelbe Haus designed by V. Olgiati).

Similar strategy of the introduction of a new building block into the already existing structure was applied by Danielle Marques and Bruno Zurkirchen in their conversion of a historic building in Bergün. Yet, in this case, the scale of architectural interventions is clearly visible and so is the contrast between the two forms. A smooth cuboid of light wood introduced into the circumference of the barn perfectly emphasizes the imperfections of the old building: wall cracks, roughness of the stone texture and thick plaster or the cracks and deflections of the rafters.

Figure 2. Danielle Marques and Bruno Zurkirchen, house in Bergün, 1994-1996. Wooden cuboid, wherein the residential function was inserted into the outline of the walls of the old barn, so that the windows are visible fragments of old walls. (source: author's photograph)

This contrastive, yet very sensual, juxtaposition of modern and traditional forms and functions, materials, textures and colours, renders in effect a unique palimpsest - an architectural record of changes, which despite the difference of the applied forms, continue to preserve the character of the place. In both cases: Clavio and house in Bergün, we are facing an architectural implant: new forms get introduced into the already existing structure in a manner which would

not distort the historical forms, which, however, would preserve the autonomy of the old and new facilities.

The atelier of a poet and a bard, Linard Bardill, designed by Valerio Olgiati, may serve as a good example of the phenomenon of micro-intervention. The form of the building, in accordance with the guidelines of the conservator of the commune of Scharans, was to recreate the outline and the silhouette of the demolished farm building, however, not literally. Instead of characteristic for this region wood, brick-red dyed reinforced concrete was applied. Change of the structure has allowed for only partial accommodation of the interior -meeting the expectations of the dweller. A work studio and a room for relaxation as well as a yard with the view to the neighbouring houses and mountains were included. A house-atelier would also encompass the plot itself, joining the elements of an atrial house with the local building traditions into one cohesive unit. Bardill's atelier has used the scheme of a typical house. One enters the garden through a typical gate, next the interior via the main entrance; this scheme was, however, in this case modified a bit - you enter the garden via the front door and the interior -through a sliding glass wall. Traditional elements were distorted or rearranged. In this case, micro-intervention has gained a multivalent meaning. On the one hand, it has allowed the architects to preserve the historically fixed building outline, integrated into a larger entirety. On the other hand, farming functions have been replaced with cultural ones.

Micro-interventions subtly change the manner of use of public space by introducing into them facilities related to culture and historical memory, which however, are to be subjected to a number of different aspects of life in the commune. Such micro-interventions are part of a wider strategy, mainly targeted for the adaptation of the communes to the transformations of agricultural areas due to mechanisation or change of the profile of agricultural production, which require merger of land areas or extension of the service buildings.

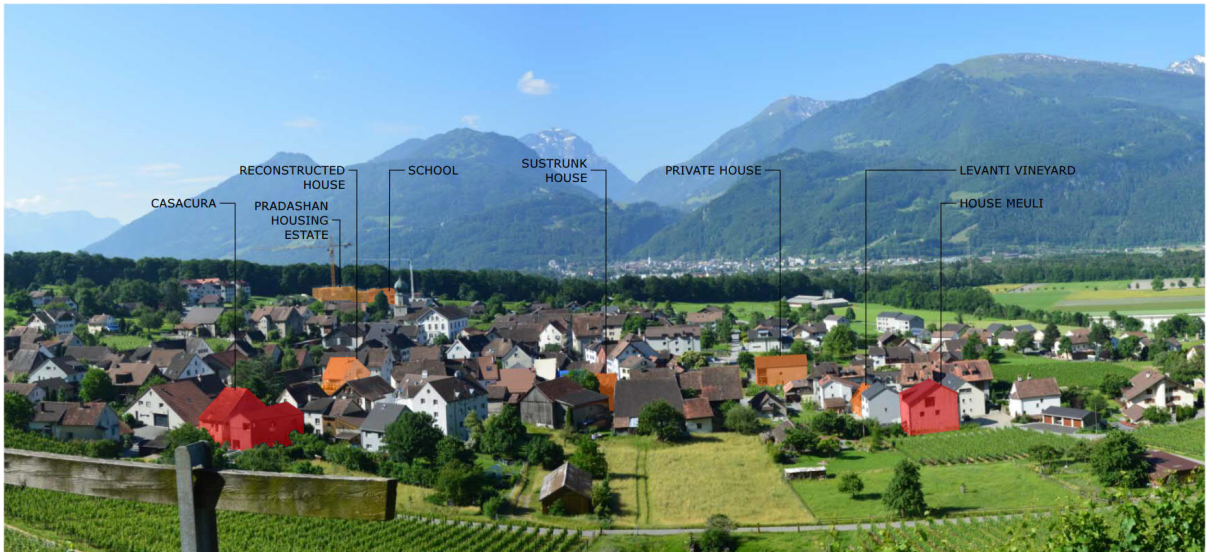

Figure 3. The panoramic view of Fläsch: micro-interventions designed by the architects of Atelier-F consisted in the extension and reconstruction of two houses: Casacura and Süsstrunk and the adaptation of farm buildings for vineyard buildings (Adank, Marugg and Levanti vineyards). (Source: the author's photograph and graphical elaboration)

In Fläsch, the commune has decided to go for wine production, as a result many old buildings were reconstructed for the purposes of vineyards and wine houses under the designs of Kurt Hauenstein and Daniel Jäger from Atelier F.

Project Vrin

The commune of a small town of Vrin, has made a decision on gradual transformation into a local tourist centre and a weekend resort, maintaining, however, the previous sector of business activity. Set up in 1979 Pro Vrin foundation, with the funds granted by Gion A. Caminada, has successfully implemented a three stage strategy which comprised modernisation and reconstruction of the existing buildings, designing new buildings in the outskirts of the village and development of the nearby area with facilities dedicated for agricultural production. Caminada, responsible for the planning and designing new facilities, would respect local typology, would use traditional materials and construction technology, in a modern way though. The facilities he designed, namely a multi-purpose hall and the office of the commune of Vrin,

a slaughterhouse with farm buildings, residential houses (including his own) and a funeral chapel, refer to the historical architecture of Vrin, yet they are not based on quotations, but they rather use the power of an archetype shaped by the climate and landscape.

Totenstube building is in particular a good example here. Located on the slope, just at the parochial church, this small building belongs to the entire commune, however, on the day of a funeral it is in temporary possession of the family of the deceased[3]. Caminada said:

> *The important thing is that the atmosphere of the chapel of the dead should not be oppressive. The idea is to move between the sacred and the profane.* […] *The form of the object derives from the place itself. In the interior there should be sufficient space for life. Space for grief, but also space to transcend grief.* (Schaub, 2000, p. 140)

The two storeys: one at the level of the village with separate entrances for the coffin and the mourners and the second at the level of the cemetery at the church correspond to the road from home to church (implying the road from the earth to heaven). This is the reason why Caminada incorporated a typology of a house: a stone roof covered a compact block with slight divisions of the elevation with freely distributed "ordinary" windows. A *struckbau* structure made of larch beams also shows references to the neighbouring houses, with one difference - white colour of *Totenstube* elevation was supposed to underline its distinctiveness as well as to link it with the church building block.

[3] In the Swiss-German dialect the word *stube* means a living room or a kitchen. That's why, on the upper storey, Caminada designed a bathroom and a kitchen; in small towns of Grisons public buildings serve a number of different functions. (Spier, Tschanz, 2003, p. 60-62).

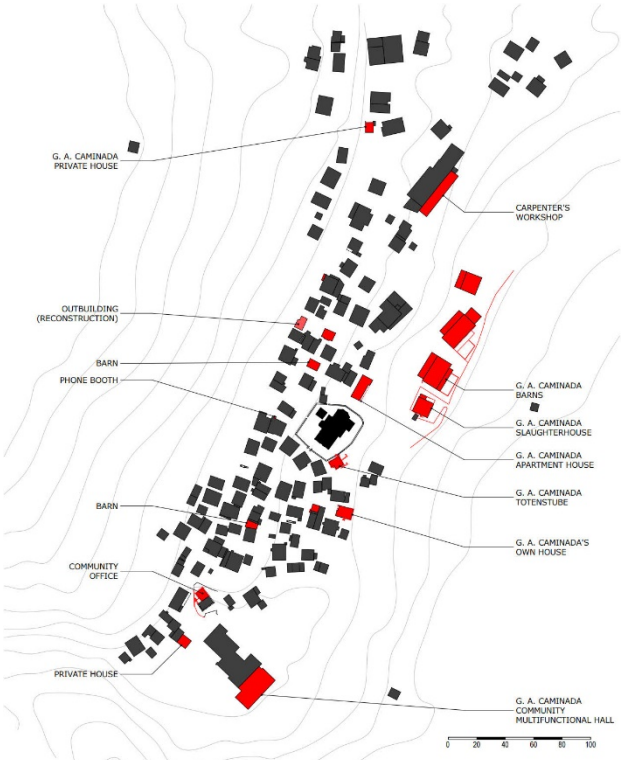

Figure 4. Facilities erected due to the activities of Pro-Vrin foundation supported by G.A. Caminada marked on the plan of Vrin. (source: author's drawing on the basis of www.map.geo.gr.ch/gr,access: 14.07.2015.)

Together with the neighbouring micro-interventions, *Totenstube* jointly forms the silhouette of Vrin with no distortion of its historical outlook and its relations with the landscape, which are subject to protection equivalent to the protection of the proper relations between old and new development. Subtle differences in the detail shaping or in the use of traditional materials, with simultaneous observance of the same scale, geometry or the roof shape for instance mark the continuation of traditional forms viewed as evolution thereof. The adopted by Swiss architects method of *patient search* for the right spatial and formal solutions has developed under the negotiatory nature of cooperation of the architects and the inhabitants and the perception of a commune as a client/investor, even if the subject of the design is a private facility. Thus, despite changes, any activities in the social and architectural spheres represent continued identification with a place.

Final conclusion

Development of traditional architectural forms and participation of local communes in their planning and designing facilitates a specific attitude of creators and users. On the one hand, such attitude shows tolerance and openness to new trends, maintaining, on the other hand, distance from them and a critical viewpoint towards them. New solutions get filtered through well-established cultural and climatic factors, which, with their austerity and terrain, are the final verifiers. In other words, architects and users do have this **ability of negating** any *future trends*, exercised in favour of the right choices of those ideas that meet the historical and natural conditions. Confrontation of new trends, tendencies and ideology with strong and deeply felt tradition and environment deemed to be a significant value, verifies the assumptions of these new trends or tendencies, and in consequence adjusts or rejects them respectively. Changes are introduced on the condition that they are well thought of and integrated within the historical and cultural continuum. Architects feel responsible before the commune they cooperate with, and the commune usually makes decisions in view of the best interest of the community and not in view of temporary benefits. Therefore, solutions may be undertaken contrary to the commonly prevailing trends, a decision of the Zermatt commune, banning the use of cars in this area and freezing the sale of building plots to external investors may serve as an example here. As a result of this decision, all the areas around Zermatt belong to the local families of the commune, which in turn is a majority investor in cable cars and ski lifts in the area covering around 350 km of ski pistes. This is an exceptional case in the times of global economy and sales of communal property. This and similar decisions delimit the directions of development and, to some extent, affect its pace. They give the people and place the time to prepare for changes and to adjust the changes. A planning autonomy of the communes gains a particular meaning, and so does the *patient search* for modern forms undertaken by the architects on the basis of the know-how and identification with the local tradition. Its output is the architecture of the aesthetics which can be described as abstract tradition, therefore, aesthetics where the selection of local features is justified with the phenomenology. The

need of transposition of specified meaning gradually faints, suppressed with such architectural forms, which, on the one hand, are to revoke its archetype by way of association and on the other hand, to correspond to modern lifestyle.

Figure 5. Anette Gigon and Mike Guyer, house in Luven, 2005-2007. Block of the house has been nicely integrated with a mountain slope and the ridge line adjusted to the mountain slope makes up an extension of the ridge of the neighbouring building. Finishing of the roof and the elevation with copper shingles is as much durable as finishing with traditional larch beams; and like the larch beams, the copper shingles also change in time in a noble manner. (source: photo of the author)

Frequently encountered variety of form, which results from the use of non-traditional technologies, nevertheless nicely blends with the characteristic austerity and simplicity of form and structure typical of Swiss architecture formed in response to the conditions of the place and climate. This involves a significant reduction of details and traditional, architectural elements: cornices, eaves, balustrades etc. Furthermore, the differences between a wall and a roof are levelled off; planes morph creating an abstract composition which more and more often refers to natural forms rather than to forms of regional architecture. Facilities designed by such architects as Mierta and Kurt Lazzarini (Crap La Tgina in Flims) or Anette Gigon and Mike Guyer (house in Luven) have been inspired

with the shapes of rocks or geological formations or directly with the terrain. This trend of local architecture, based on archetypes and nature, successfully manages to sneak away from the traps of architecture being the expression of nostalgia and longing for other times, featuring a relative *sentimentalism* and enigmatic *familiarity,* but no identification with a place, either on the level of an individual or a commune.

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His current research is focused on history of meaning of space and place, new forms of regional architecture, and humanistic architecture.

REGIONALISM IN GDR-MODERNISM OF THE 1960s AND 1970s

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Abstract

The widespread narrative that all GDR-Metropolises were overwritten by a soul- and faceless socialist variant of post-war modernism must be questioned at least regarding some cities. Although whole streets were torn down in the 1960s and 1970s and history was only partially appreciated, there can be found a series of modernist buildings respecting local traditions.
Thus, regionalisms express themselves in traditional building materials – in the early 1960s most prominently in the Northeastern City of Rostock, whose brick-faced postwar buildings in the centre were recently categorized as 'Nordmoderne' ('northern modernism').
In the late 1960s and early 1970s, meanwhile, attempts have been made in Potsdam to adapt new modern structures to existing baroque and classicist buildings by materials, facade colours or vertical subdivisions of facades – in order to merge new and old buildings into a 'harmonic' unity.
Regarding the development of modernism in East Germany, the regionalisms mentioned above seem to have different roots. As the Haus der Schiffahrt in Rostock's Lange Straße could be explained as late successor of the 1950s Stalinist doctrin of the 'National Tradition', buildings such as the Institut für Lehrerbildung or Staudenhof in Potsdam seem to be efforts to avoid increasing monotony of east-modern architecture.

Keywords: GDR, Socialism, Rostock, Potsdam

Although whole streets were torn down in many East German cities in the 1960s and 1970s and history was only partially appreciated, there can be found a series of modernist buildings respecting local traditions.

In this essay I would like to try to explain the genesis of these regionalisms in GDR post-war modernism of the 1960s and 1970s in Rostock and Potsdam. Concerning the development of modernism in East Germany, they seem to have different roots – in comparison to the democratic west, as well as looking to the various phases of the GDR's architecture itself. The essay should not only present selected structures in both cities, but also wants to analyze their cultural and historical context. At least, the GDR's Politics of memory (Geschichtspolitik)

in Rostock as a former Hanseatic city and Potsdam as a former Prussian residence is of importance and must be considered.

In the socialist German Democratic Republic (GDR) urban planning and architecture – unlike in the western-democratic Federal Republic of Germany – were unthinkable without the influence of state and party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands / SED). This applied both to the handling of the built heritage and to the design or function of the new buildings.

Analogous to the ever-shifting relationship between demolition and the preservation of the 'old city' the development of a 'socialist' architecture took place in the constant field of tension between tradition and modernism. In simple terms there are four phases, starting with the orientation of many architects to modernism of the Weimar Republic in the immediate postwar period, the subsequent phase of historicizing and traditionalist architecture of the 'National Tradition' until about 1955, followed by a renewed turn to (international) modernism with a simultaneous industrialization of the construction process. The latter continued until the end of the GDR and culminated in large satellite towns. From the end of the 1970s onwards, historicizing tendencies – which can be regarded as a kind of East German expression of postmodernism – again can be identified in the city centers. With regard to urban planning lots of historic streets were overbuild and especially residential buildings were demolished up to the 1970s. Modern as well as traditionalist new buildings were often overdimensioned. From the end of the 1970s on greater consideration was given to the historical ground plan of the cities, which nevertheless did not exclude demolitions. Of course there have been overlaps or interactions between all these phases.[1]

The first phase of a historicizing architecture, in which local and regional building traditions were taken up at the same time, began in the early 1950s with the doctrine of the 'National Tradition' influenced by the Soviet Union. Past epochs and architectural styles were now been interpreted '*as progressive in the sense of Marxism's teleological notion of history'* (Lippert, 2017, p. 21). From German architectural history the choice fell first and foremost on classicism, which allegedly represented the democratic bourgeoisie. The selected 'progressive

1 For an overwiew (urban planning and architecture in the GDR) see for example Hoscislawski, 1991 or Palutzki, 2000, for case studies see also Butter & Hofer, 2017, and for 'postmodern' *tendencies* Angermann, 2018.

traditions' that now were to be 'creatively developed' could also include the Gothic, the Renaissance or sometimes even the Baroque (e.g. Lippert, 2017 or Klusemann, 2017). The '16 Grundsätze des Städtebaus' ('Sixteen Principles of Urban Design') from 1950 – that were obligatory now – defined the spatial framework with broad 'main streets' ('Magistralen'), wide 'central squares' and a hierarchization of buildings right down to the center, where big residential buildings and high-rise buildings had to be constructed. Major historical buildings should be integrated in the new ensembles, but nonetheless many old (mostly residential) buildings were demolished. Although the 'compact city' was retained, streets were widened.[2]

The 'fight' against modernism, discredited as 'Western' and 'American', was one of the central motives for the development of this representative and eclectic architecture with its overemphasis on the facades, that served not least as 'socialist festive rooms' ('Sozialistische Festräume')[3] (Wagner, 2018). Nevertheless, after the 'turning point in construction' ('Wende im Bauwesen'[4]) around 1954/1955 and the increasing industrialization of the building industry, of all things modernism found its way into the architecture of the GDR.

Not least because of the mass-built prefabricated apartment blocks ('Plattenbauten') in a period from the late 1950s to the turn of 1989/90 – also near or in the city centers – many West-Germans condemn – up to this day – GDR-modernism as an especially soul- and faceless socialist variant of post-war architecture, which took no account of history or tradition at all. Thus Regionalisms, as they are found in West German post-war modernism[5], are not expected in the East. However, even in the 'second German state', turning to

[2] The 'Sixteen Principles of Urban Design' – that were passed by the Council of Ministers of the GDR after the so-called 'Journey to Moscow' of senior officials and architects in the summer of 1950 – were the guiding principles for urban development in the GDR from 1950 up to the early 1960s. The model for the 'beautiful German city' was urban planning of the Stalinist Soviet Union. For an overview see Durth et alii, 1998.
[3] 'Socialist festive rooms' can be understood as a stage for marches and events.
[4] After Stalin's death his successor, CPSU party leader Nikita Khrushchev, spoke out in favour of turning away from the facade architecture, which was now considered too expensive, at the Moscow 'All-Union Conference of Building Workers'. The evaluation of the new soviet building policy including the slow conversion of construction processes to industrialization, took place in the GDR after the first construction conference in 1955. See Die große Wende im Bauwesen. In Deutsche Architektur 5/1956, Magazine 1 (pp. 1-3). Industrialization meant that now mainly standard building types with prefabricated parts produced in factories were built. Individually planned buildings were also increasingly, albeit not exclusively, constructed from prefabricated elements. For more information about the slow endings of the 'National Tradition' see Salomon, 2016.
[5] See for example the town hall of Aschaffenburg (1956-1958, Diez Brandi) with a facade of mottled sandstone widely used in the city's building tradition.

functional solutions did not mean abandoning a regional touch. But how can this rather unknown and so far only partially explored phenomenon be explained?

An early expression of regionalist modernism in the GDR can be found in the north-east city of Rostock near the Baltic Sea. It immediately follows the phase of the 'National Tradition'. In the port city the war-ruined and – besides St. Mary's Church – demolished Lange Straße was rebuilt according to the model of the Berlin 'Stalinallee' as 'Magistrale' from 1953 on. The buildings are mostly brick-faced and pick up 'National Traditions' with gables, wind holes or blind arcades. In this case 'National Traditions' include the Northern German Brick Gothic, that characterized churches (such as St. Mary's e.g.) and the architecture of town halls in the Hanseatic cities in the Baltic Sea area in the Middle Ages. The latter were – next to others mainly classicist models (e.g. Klusemann, 2017) – defined as a role model by the President of the 'German Building Academy' ('Deutsche Bauakademie' / DBA), Kurt Liebknecht[6].

But, astonishingly enough, also the *Haus der Schiffahrt* (an office building for the 'Deutsche Seereederei', 1959-1962, Joachim Näther), a reinforced concrete skeleton construction, and a residential high-rise building in masonry construction (Alfred Radner, 1959-1960) that had been built *after* the end of the 'National Tradition' – and completed the unfinished torso of the Lange Straße west and east in terms of urban planning – are mainly brick-clad. Similarly, another high-rise residential building, a Laubenganghaus (1966-1967, Dieter Jastram / Hans Fleischhauer), which is located approximately in the middle of the street, also fits seamlessly into the ensemble of the early 1950s with a brick-clad facade [Figure 1. & Figure 2.].

[6] The German Building Academy, founded in 1951, was the most important institution in the GDR building industry, 'which had the last word in all questions of construction technology, architecture and urban development' (Lippert, 2018, p. 11.) The Academy, which was based on the Moscow All-Union Academy of Architecture, and its individual research institutes (including theory and history of architecture) were under the authority of the Ministry of Construction. From 1951 to 1961 its president was Kurt Liebknecht. In this function, but also as a member of the Central Committee of the SED, he had a ground-breaking influence on the development of architecture in the GDR. His architectural handwriting was versatile. His teacher Hans Poelzig, with whom he had earned his diploma in Berlin at the end of the 1920s, and *Neues Bauen* had initial influences. He was also influenced by the constructivism of the Soviet Union. In 1937 he became a Soviet citizen but however he returned to Berlin in 1948. In the 1930s he was significantly influenced by the neoclassical architecture of Stalin, which was to determine his work in the GDR in the 1950s. See Düwel, 1995.

Figure 1. Rostock, western end of the Lange Straße (view to the northeast), with the brick-clad Haus der Schiffahrt (1959-1962, Joachim Näther) on the left, followed by buildings of the early 1950s with adaptions of Northern German Brick Gothic (Joachim Näther et. alii), the brick-clad Laubenganghaus (1966-1967, Dieter Jastram / Hans Fleischhauer), and, on the right, the travel agency building (1964-1967, Dieter Jastram / Hans Fleischhauer) covered with reddish ceramic tiles. Source: Postcard, VEB Bild und Heimat Reichenbach, 1973, Picture: R. Schlegel / Picture provided by Ansichtskarten-Lexikon.de. The author has researched to the best of his knowledge and belief to locate the holder of rights. If that should not have succeeded completely, the author asks for notification

Even the motif of struts for vertical structuring of facades – reminiscent of the Gothic – was adapted (especially at the residential high-rise building in the east of the Lange Straße) [Figure 2.].

Their typology as modernist residential or office buildings can be seen through its openings (‘Erschließung’) or, in the latter example, in the ‘*readability of the residential function*’ (Architectural guide Rostock, 1978, quoted after Hartung, 2005, p. 194). In detail, however, it was still possible to refer to traditional sources and to ‘*local 'traditions''*, as the German architectural historian Ulrich Hartung exposed in opposition to the ‘*negligent statement’* that the GDR had entered architectural modernism with building ‘*the same 'boxes' everywhere*’ (Hartung, 2005, p. 195).

***Figure* 2.** Rostock, eastern end of Lange Straße (view to the east, 2011), modern partially brick-clad residential high-rise building (Alfred Radner, 1959-1960) and earlier built Block E in 'National Tradition' with adaptions of Northern German Brick Gothic on the left (Carl-Heinz Pastor). © Picture: Christian Klusemann

In fact, an independent 'socialist' modernism has been discussed for the period after 1955 (Kossel, 2013). At the same time Bauakademie President Kurt Liebknecht did not want to get rid of the doctrine of 'National Tradition' immediately. Thus, the modern new buildings erected in the city centers in the second half of the 1950s could and should recline to the already existing buildings (Hohn, 1992).

This was also pointed out regarding the *Haus der Schiffahrt* in the architecture journal 'German Architecture' ('Deutsche Architektur'), published by the 'German Building Academy': '*All closed surfaces were made of brick, as this material emerges as an important design element in the construction of the Lange Straße and there are direct connections between the new building and the existing substance*' (Deutsche Architektur, 1964, p. 37).

In Berlin's 'Stalinallee' the second building phase – that had started in 1959 – was also adapted to the earlier buildings of the first phase. Here, however, the connections are more pronounced in terms of urban planning due to the buildings' height and their parallel arrangement to the street (Hartung, 2005),

although tiles made of Meissen porcelain should at least convey to the older buildings (Salomon, 2016). In Rostock, the architectural connection through material is more evident. Recently the buildings discussed here were categorized as 'Nordmoderne' ('northern modernism') (Writschan, 2016). It is not surprising that the reference to regional building traditions on the facades of modern high-rise buildings is still valued among the population of Rostock today.[7]

Tradition and modernism were by no means mutually exclusive in the architecture of the GDR until the early 1960s, as can also be seen at the Berlin State Council Building (Staatratsgebäude). Not only was Portal IV[8] of the City Palace (Stadtschloss), which was blown up in 1950, included in the facade as spolia. Also the building's high sandstone socle and a broad cornice evoke a 'classical' impression (Salomon, 2016).

With some caution it is therefore possible to speak of a 'modernized' version of the architecture of 'National Tradition' after 1955.

From the end of the 1950s modernism prevailed especially outside the city centers in structures built with industrialized pieces (Escherich, 2018) and the 'Sixteen Principles of Urban Design' as guiding principles for the redesign of the city centers were successively reformulated during the period 1959-1965 (Topfstedt, 1988). But, according to the First Secretary of the SED, Walter Ulbricht – who personally took part in debates on architecture during his whole time in office[9] – the city centers still should be designed architecturally more sophisticated (Salomon, 2016). After 1960, however, such grandiose plannings for the centers only slowly prevailed. Instead prefabricated housing increased in the inner cities. Frequently, the concepts developed 'in the early days of industrial building' for the residential areas in the outskirts were not a solution for 'the tasks to be performed in the city centres'. (Topfstedt, 1988 S. 51).

[7] Conversation between the author and Peter Writschan (monument protection authority of the Hanseatic city of Rostock), 10/20/2016 in Rostock.
[8] Although the Berlin City Palace was blown up in 1950 as a symbol of Prussian absolutism, a copy of Portal IV was included in the construction of the State Council Building for historical-political reasons, since the co-founder of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) Karl Liebknecht had declared the Socialist Republic there on November 9th, 1918.
[9] In office from 1950-1971, until 1953 Secretary General. His successor was Erich Honecker from 1971-1989.

In the face of growing concern that industrialization and modernization might lead to 'monotony' (Topfstedt, 1988), the party leadership again suggested to consider local specifics in the design of new buildings, whereas in town planning a 'socialist' character should be preserved (Escherich, 2018). It was in the middle of the 1960s when the redevelopment plans for the city centers got real chances for realization. At project meetings Walter Ulbricht now personally demanded to observe the '*typical architectural pictures*' of the cities in the GDR (quoted after Escherich, 2018, p. 96).

In the former Hanseatic city of Rostock, in which traditions such as peaceful and international trade with the countries bordering the Baltic Sea could be integrated into the GDRs Politics of memory (Seegers, 2003), the preservation of regional characteristics for new buildings was officially emphasized by the city and the district management of the SED in 1964 (Wolfes, 2009). Thus, even the prefabricated and meanwhile demolished *Interhotel Warnow* and the accompanying L-shaped travel agency and dormitory (which still exists in parts) on the south-western side of the Lange Strasse (1964-1967, Dieter Jastram / Hans Fleischhauer / Wolfgang Hartmann) referred to the traditional brick construction method with reddish ceramic tiles (Hartung, 2005) [Figure 1**.**]. The same applies to almost all buildings in the large housing estates in Rostock (Writschan, 2018).

Certainly, in the city centre the new modernist buildings – just like the buildings of the 'National Tradition' – did not pay much attention to the historical scale of the city. The only connection to history and tradition was the used material. Preserved buildings such as St. Mary´s Church or the remains of the Market Place (more or less) seemed to be marginalized.[10]

Meanwhile, the handling of the urban and architectural heritage in the GDR was marked by ambivalences and contradictions. Everything that could be useful for '*the development of the socialist way of life*' (Hoscislawski, 1991, p. 223) had a chance to survive. Everything that did not fit into the picture had to make way for the new. At the same time the importance of the remainds classified as worth

[10] Despite these examples there are some buildings that are better adapted to the historical cityscape through gables, their roof shapes and their orientation to the historical town plan, such as the Hauptpost (1953-1956, Heinz Pätzold and architecture collective) or the *Haus Sonne* (1967, Fritz Hering and Dieter Jastram). Like the historic gabled houses on Neumarkt – that survived the war or were rebuilt – these buildings are plastered.

preserving was not always fully appreciated. And, of course, Socialism could best be represented by new buildings.[11]

However, from the mid-1960s onwards the focus in the field of tension between demolition and new construction in the city centres shifted partially towards preservation. According to the 'Principles of Planning and Designing Towns' of 1965, selected historical buildings still had to shape the city centers, at least parts of them (Escherich, 2018).

The constant back and forth of modern and traditional ideas also became apparent in urban planning: Although 'spaciousness' and 'generosity' had still been propagated around 1960 and historical road networks were or were to be built over (Topfstedt, 1988), the 'Principles' again proposed more compact urban spaces (Escherich, 2018).

For Potsdam, the latter only had a partial effect because the planning of the centre with wide and open spaces, which had already been envisaged around 1960, continued to shape the constantly modified planning. During the construction of the 'Zentrum Süd', that had begun in 1960 and was isolated from overall planning (Topfstedt, 1988), a large part of the war-destroyed eastern old town with its narrow streets had been demolished and was completely overbuilt with scale-busting new buildings, that – at least at first sight – did not follow Potsdam's building traditions. However, Edda Campen assumes that the balconies of the new buildings, which close off the southern centre towards the water and open onto the river Havel, were deliberately intended to create a connection to Potsdam's topography (Campen, 2011).

Moreover, in the former residential town, buildings with special significance for the monarchy were extraordinarily threatened after the 'victory of socialism', for they were seen as symbols of the Prussian Kings, that were discredited as 'militaristic' in the GDR (Topfstedt, 1988). The city palace, reconstructed in 2014, was demolished in 1959/1960, the Garrison Church (1730-1735, Philipp Gerlach), which is currently also being rebuilt, fell in 1968.[12] After all, some

[11] For an overview about demolition and preservation of historical buildings in the GDR see Topfstedt, 1988, Palutzki, 2000 or Hoscislawski, 1991. For monument preservation in the GDR see for example Landesdenkmalamt Berlin, 2014.

[12] The church' inglorious history on the 'Day of Potsdam', when President of the Reich Paul von Hindenburg and the newly elected Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler symbolically shook hands in the

architectural achievements commissioned by the Prussian rulers could be reinterpreted as the work of '*important builders, artists and craftsmen*' (Uhlemann, 1986, p. 5), as the architectural peculiarities of the city were appreciated (Dähmlow et alii, 2006). Thus, selected monuments were to be preserved in the redesign of Potsdam's city centre.

The number of buildings to be preserved changed during the 1960s but an attempt at a mixture of old and new – that, as in Rostock, led to complete new spacial relationships – can still be seen. The Old Town Hall (Altes Rathaus, 1753-1755, Johann Boumann / Christian Ludwig Hildebrandt) the Nikolai Church (1830-1850, Karl Friedrich Schinkel / Ludwig Persius / Friedrich August Stüler) and even the Marstall (rebuilt 1746, Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff), once part of the City Palace ensemble, were permanently integrated into the new 'socialist' centre.

During a visit to Potsdam in the summer of 1967 Ulbricht, who now advocated modernism but at the same time monumentality in the city centres (Salomon, 2016), admonished the planned redesign. The new buildings seemed too monotonous to him. No '*concrete coffins*', but a '*new architecture*' should be created, for the city should '*have a certain character after all*' (Ulbricht quoted after Grünzig, 2017, p. 341-342).

The 'Potsdam City Centre Development Committee' ('Aufbaukomitee Stadtzentrum Potsdam'), founded in 1969 and chaired by the first secretary of the SED district management, finally advocated '*varied, interesting solutions*' on the Old Market Square (Alter Markt) – the city centre up to the destruction of the war – '*which adapt to the character of the historic valuable buildings and at the same time give the city a new, unmistakable character through generous ensemble formation and careful design of the individual buildings*' (Committee quoted after Emmerich-Focke, 1999, p. 183-184). Therefore attempts were made to adapt new modern structures to historic baroque and classicist buildings

course of the constitution of the newly elected Reichstag, played not the only but an important role in its demolition.
Hitler had consciously placed himself in the tradition of the Prussian King Frederick II and Chancellors Otto von Bismarck and Paul von Hindenburg. This supposed continuity from Prussia to National Socialism had a negative effect on the image of Prussia in the GDR from the very beginning, until it slowly turned positive in the 1970s when the GDR increasingly saw itself as its own state due to recognition by the UN.

by materials, facade colours or vertical subdivisions of facades.[13] This does not apply to all new city centre buildings especially not to the *Interhotel Potsdam* (1969, Sepp Weber). A local reference was far from as easy to implement as in Rostock, where visible results could be achieved by brick alone. However, approaches of a local reference can be seen in the two connected buildings of the *Institut für Lehrerbildung* and the *Wissenschaftliche Allgemeinbibliothek* between Friedrich-Ebert-Straße and Alter Markt and, to a lesser extent, in the so-called *Staudenhof*. However, the scale of these new buildings was changed in favour of large forms.

The *Institut für Lehrerbildung* (IfL), an institute for educating teachers, was built between 1971 and 1977 (Sepp Weber / Wolfgang Merz / Dieter Lietz / Herbert Gödicke) based on the plans of the 1960s. In addition to Sepp Weber, who was also involved here, the architects of the neighbouring apartment block Am Alten Markt 10 (built 1971-1972 and colloquially called *Staudenhof* after the adjoining green area) Hartwig Ebert, Peter Mylo and Fritz Neuendorf were also responsible for the *Wissenschaftliche Allgemeinbibliothek*, a library building connected to the IfL, which was also built in reinforced concrete skeleton construction from 1970-1974 (Metropolar, 2011).

The IfL, which was demolished in the summer of 2018, consisted of a rectangular bar between Friedrich-Ebert-Straße and Alter Markt and three segments, each enclosing an inner courtyard. All segments were three-storeys high, with the ground floor zones marked by colonnades. The upper floors were vertically divided by reinforced concrete pilasters. Until its renovation in the 2010s the facade structure of the library was, in principle, similar to that of the IfL-complex but it was and still is a five-storey building.[14]

Interestingly, the individual modules (with a completely different choice of materials) recall Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's *Home Federal Savings and Loan* building in Des Moines/Iowa (1959-1962) in cubature and in the elevation of the facade with colonnades in the ground floor and vertical lines in the two floors above.

[13] Interview of the author with the landscape architect Hiltrud Berndt from Potsdam, who was involved in the redesign of the centre with the design of the green space 'Staudenhof', on 10/12/2017 in Potsdam.
[14] Today, however, the facade is characterised by two high storeys above the still existing pillar colonnades, so that the five-storey structure is no longer visible.

Figure 3. Potsdam, Alter Markt, view to the northwest (2016) with the Institut für Lehrerbildung on the left (1971-1977, Sepp Weber / Wolfgang Merz / Dieter Lietz / Herbert Gödicke), the Nikolai Church (1830-1850, Karl Friedrich Schinkel / Ludwig Persius / Friedrich August Stüler) and the Old Town Hall (1753-1755, Johann Boumann / *Christian Ludwig Hildebrandt)* © Picture: Rüdiger Seyffer

By using reinforced concrete pilasters (anything but unusual for post-war modernism), however, it was possible to establish a connection to Potsdam's building traditions at the same time. Many baroque or baroque-classical buildings in Potsdam's city centre, including Alter Markt, are characterized by vertical structuring elements such as columns or pilasters. In the colonnades, which can be found in Potsdam's architectural history at the Alte Wache (1795-1797, Andreas Ludwig Krüger) and on the Barberini-Palace, built between 1771 and 1772 by Carl von Gontard (demolished in 1948 and reconstructed 2015), there can also be seen a reference to the portico of the Nikolai Church.

Instead of corrugated sheet metal, copper should originally be used for the roof cladding of the IfL. By this a further reference to the church should be established[15] [Figure 3.]. Seen from Schwertfegerstraß, the moment of rising evoked by the vertical structuring elements – starting with the narrow pillars on

[15] Interview of the author with the landscape architect Hiltrud Berndt from Potsdam, who was involved in the redesign of the centre with the design of the green space 'Staudenhof', on 10/12/2017 in Potsdam.

the ground floor via the pilaster strips – was continued to the columns of the dome tambour of the Nikolai Church [Figure 4.].

Figure 4. Potsdam, Institut für Lehrerbildung (1971-1977, Sepp Weber / Wolfgang Merz / Dieter Lietz / Herbert Gödicke) and tambour of the Nikolai Church (1830-1850, Karl Friedrich Schinkel / Ludwig Persius / Friedrich August Stüler) seen from Schwertfegerstraße to the east (2016) © Picture: Rüdiger Seyffer

As Hiltrud Berndt, landscape architect involved in the redesign of the city centre, recalls, '*transferring Potsdam motifs into modernism'* was repeatedly emphasised to the architects of Potsdam planning.[16] In order to accomplish this task the chief architect came up with the pilaster strips and the recesses in the facade (Falbe, 2017). However, according to Hartwig Ebert, who was involved in the construction, this was the '*utmost thing … that the former GDR was able to do'* (quoted after Falbe, 2017, p. 105).

Sandstone pilaster strips, such as those found on the annex of the Bundesrechnungshof (1970, Wolfgang Merz) in Dortustraße, or the copper roof, which was not realized in the end, would certainly have made the intended reference to Potsdam's historical buildings appear more tangible.

[16] Interview of the author with the landscape architect Hiltrud Berndt from Potsdam, who was involved in the redesign of the centre with the design of the green space 'Staudenhof', on 10/12/2017 in Potsdam.

However, the new buildings and the historical buildings should harmonize according to a colour concept developed in 1977 by the *Berlin School of Advertising and Design (Fachschule für Werbung und Gestaltung Berlin)* ('Farbgestaltung Stadtzentrum Potsdam', 1977, Landeshauptstadt Potsdam, Dokumentation Stadtentwicklung, p. 15. Compare Falbe, 2017).

Finally, an ochre-yellow colour tone was chosen that evoked associations with what is popularly referred to as *Potsdam Yellow* and which can be found at Sanssouci Palace and numerous histrorical town houses in the city (Klusemann et alii, 2016). References to the Nikolai Church and the Old Town Hall were also made by sandstone socles in the passages of the complex [Figure 3. and Figure 4.]. Even *Staudenhof*, which otherwise looks more like a debris, has some facade parts made of this material, which was deliberately also chosen here[17] [Figure 5.].

***Figure* 5.** Potsdam, apartment block Am Alten Markt 10 (Staudenhof, 1971-1972, Hartwig Ebert / Peter Mylo / Fritz Neuendorf) with sandstone-elements at the side. In the background the sandstone-built Nikolai Church (1830-1850, Karl Friedrich Schinkel / Ludwig Persius / Friedrich August Stüler), view to the south (2016). © Picture: Rüdiger Seyffer

[17] Interview of the author with the landscape architect Hiltrud Berndt from Potsdam, who was involved in the redesign of the centre with the design of the green space 'Staudenhof', on 10/12/2017 in Potsdam.

Despite these local references, which could unfold their full effect only to some extent (not least because of the GDR's economy of scarcity), the integration of the entire oversized complex into the once small-scale structurce of Potsdam's city centre was one of the main reasons for the decision to demolish the *Institut für Lehrerbildung* (since 1991 Potsdam University of Applied Sciences). In 1990 the City Assembly had already decided to reconstruct the city centre. A small-scale development following the historical town layout in accordance with the pre-war state is going to be built on the site.

Nevertheless, an earlier and better knowledge of the regional echoes on the facades of the IfL – not visible to everyone – might have helped to protect the building, or at least parts of it, from demolition. Especially in the Potsdam public the architects' attempts to establish a local reference were not seen or underestimated for a long time.

Another Potsdam ensemble from GDR times with reminiscences of an existing building has meanwhile been strongly reshaped or in parts demolished. At the Brauhausberg, a hill south of the city centre, the Schwimmhalle (indoor aquatic centre, 1969-1971, type construction adapted by Karl-Heinz Birkholz) and the brick-clad terrace restaurant *Minsk* (1970-1977, also Karl-Heinz Birkholz) clearly referred to the war school on top of the Brauhausberg (1899-1902, Franz Schwechten), which in GDR times housed the headquarters of the SED district management. Even here the importance for architectural history has been unrecognized for a long time even by monument preservation.

The sometimes more, sometimes less successful attempt to link old and new – even though the old often suffered as a result in terms of urban development – is a characteristic that has played an important role in urban planning and architecture in the 41 years of the GDR in the most diverse nuances. This also seems to be true for the modernist phase, at least for some cities, whereas in other cities there are stronger breaks with the local building tradition. It would be important to investigate continuities across all phases of 'GDR architecture' even more closely than it has already been done – for example, to analyse a direct follow-up to the 'National Tradition' until the 1970s, as Ulrich Hartung already suggests. He assumes that through the '*arrangement*' or '*design of building types*', the foundations and '*evaluation standards*', that began with the 'Sixteen

Principles of Urban Design', '*remained in force until the Honecker era*' (Hartung, 2005, p. 182).

It would be desirable to further explore what has been preserved, to protect it from demolition and – independently of a political romanticisation of the GDR – to preserve it as a testimony of history. Emphasizing and recognizing local or regional peculiarities may help to mitigate the widespread and often prejudiced accusation of a 'non-local' GDR modernism and to explain, if not even promote, the identity-generating effect of post-war buildings.

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NATIONALISM AND RURAL MODERNIZATION
The Spanish Tagus Valley colonization villages in the context of Southern European inner colonization

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Abstract

Between 1945 and 1965, thirty-three new agricultural pueblos de colonización [colonization villages] were built in the Spanish Tagus Valley under the action of the Instituto Nacional de Colonización (INC: 1939-1971).
Associated with works of hydraulic infrastructures and soil transformation for an intensive use of irrigated crops, these villages deeply shaped the rural landscape in the scope of an intentional modernization process of the countryside.
However, this process also contributes to achieve the agrarian utopia of the authoritarian catholic and conservative policy of Franco's regime. In addition, the changed status of the settler into a small landowner and the notions imported from more urban context reflected in schemes of rural planning were crucial in order to avoid the exodus towards the city.
This paper aims to explore the patterns used in the conception of the pueblos and their relation with national identity building process in the context of similar processes occurred in the Southern Europe.
The relation between modernity and traditional references, both in urban shape and architectural design, will be explored, with special attention to the Civic Centre, a mandatory requirement of the pueblo's programme, functioning as the core of the urban fabric. Its composition and facilities architectonic options will be analyzed, as well as its role in the power rhetoric.
The articulation with coeval theoretical debates and external models will be used to understand in which level the Spanish experience contributes to the international architectural culture and the regional process of appropriation of similar experiences from abroad in the Modern Movement context.

Keywords: pueblos de colonización, rural planning, Spanish inner colonization, civic centre, modernist landscape

Framework

In 1939, after the civil war and with the country devastated, '*the regeneration of the Spanish rural world is the excuse used by the new regime for the construction of the new order* [...] *and the agrarian colonization assumed by the*

Franco regime acquired from the beginning the condition of mission'. (Flores Soto, 2013b, p p.452-453)

The value of the countryside and the improvement of rural man's living conditions will be increased by an intentional modernization process of land reform, focusing on a broad investment in intensive irrigated crop, on which high levels of agricultural profits are expected.

For this purpose, the hydrographical basins were reorganized to improve more easily the irrigation possibilities through large-scale hydraulic infrastructures.

The association between hydraulic works and inner colonization is deeply rooted in Spanish rural territory management since 19th century. Thus, in 1865, with the *Hydrological recognition of the Ebro basin,* the construction of new settlements was already clearly understood as part of hydraulic policy. (Monclús & Oyón, 1988).

In fact, it was the change of agrarian quality of the land that turns necessary to fix permanent agricultural labour in the new irrigated areas, which were divided into family units of cultivation. Consequently, about three hundred new rural villages of modern morphology were built in rural environment, involving around 40.000 families.

The implications of such development had consequences in the status of the settler who changed into a small landowner, in order to avoid the exodus from countryside to city, accordingly with the authoritarian political interests of Franco.

To implement the Spanish agricultural policy, the ***Instituto Nacional de Colonización*** (INC: 1939-1971) [National Institute for Colonisation] was the official administrative entity, empowered by the Ministry of Agriculture, to operate a set of actions strongly structuring. A radical transformation of the territory such as the hydraulic and the road works, the deforestation, the earthwork, or the changing the native vegetation, as well as the construction of the settlements, gave rise to a new rural landscape.

Under the action of the INC their architects acquired a privileged knowledge in the field of the rural planning practice.

Traditional options evolved into more modern conceptions such as the modular grid, the hierarchy of streets, the city block, the square, the public space or the gardens, which came to shape more *urban* type interventions, however dimensioned within the scale of the rural landscape.

The INC's decision for concentrated settlements provided the patterns of an urban social life, education, health, leisure, administrative services, infrastructure network, '*that would definitively assimilate the living conditions of the countryside to those of the city[...] equating the agrarian environment with the urban.*' (Oyón, 1985, p.246) The will of building a community was fundamental.

Consequently, autonomous ***pueblos*** were raised around a civic centre, with its physical limits clearly outlined over the agricultural land plots, presenting themselves as an urban front in relation to the surrounding countryside.

Being the civic centre the *core* of the pueblo, its place, form, public space design and architectural features of the buildings that surround it act as a mechanism of organization of the urban fabric morphology, setting to each colonization village its own identity.

To study the civic centre´s scheme(s), both in relation to its ideological concept as also to architectural and social program, the **thirty-three *pueblos*** of the Tagus Valley, built between 1945 and 1965 were the scope of inquiry[1].

Extending through three provinces – Madrid, Toledo and Cáceres – these settlements, in which **twenty architects** were involved in its planning, reflect the whole chronological period of the INC in which it seems possible to identify different stages of activity '*foundations, maturation and development, and abandonment of the implementation of population policies*' (Pérez, 2006, p.481-504) in the accomplishment of the rural colonization.

Even before the INC, a '*debate regarding architecture and urban development conducted during the first third of the 20th century was reflected chiefly in the*

[1] In addition to the bibliography, this work is based on graphic material collected on file, field work and oral testimony record.

architectural proposals for colonization villages, which were in turn based on the work being done by different water authorities.'(Sambricio, 2007, p.13)

Structuring the Colonization: planning, plans and *pueblos*

Beyond the challenge of modernization, the field was also an urgent problem to be resolved in its socio-political and economic aspects. Aware of this reality, the idea disseminated by the INC was '*to transform the collective exploitation, from the agricultural farms, into individual ones, giving to each settler a plot of economic independence*', being one of its '*fundamental objectives to provide social stability to the Spanish countryside*'. (INC, 1964a)

In order to carry out the intended economic and social land reform, technical planning tools were created, with a different scale of intervention, implementation phase and level of detail.

> Declared as a high national interest, the colonization of an irrigated area, the INC drafted the corresponding '**General Colonization Plan**' [...] which establishes the technical and economic foundations of the new agrarian structure [...] the description of the works and the definition of the most appropriate units of exploitation [...] determine approximately the number of families that can be installed [...] as well as the implantation and characteristics of the new settlements. (Monclús & Oyón, 1983, p.72)

It is also in this General Plan that the selection of the settler is defined, and the areas assigned to *tierras en reserva*, lands that remained under the landowner propriety, and to *tierras en excesso* [lands in excess], resulting from the expropriation of latifundia.

If the general plan outlines the main purposes and actions, the **'Coordination Plan of Works**' and the '**Project of Parceling**' are its *modus operandi*. On the one hand, irrigation and sanitation networks and service roads are planned to ensure the basic infrastructures to each unit of exploitation. On the other hand, the location of the settlements is defined, positioned in the gravitational centre of the plots distributed to each settler.

Equidistant, within a radius of influence of 2.5km, (the so-called *modulo carro* [cart module][2], the *pueblos* were '*all identical in importance and without hierarchy levels'*. (Flores Soto, 2013b, p.464) Together, they formed a wide net system among the territory, close to large areas of private cultivation, which itself would benefit from such an organization.

The notion of *family unit type* in which an urban lot is associated with a land plot of agricultural exploitation will give rise to a new agrarian structure. The legal-administrative link between the settler and the INC will be significant in the possibility of expansion of the *pueblo* itself

In the latter case, two types will be predetermined: (1) *non evolutive pueblos* with a fixed number of settlers and with little expectation of expansion; (2) *evolutive pueblos* with two stages of execution, usually located near the large areas of irrigation. Enlargement zones for housing and urban voids to build new facilities in a second phase have been set from the beginning in the urban design.

At last, the '**Plans of Works**' materialize the great options of the internal colonization. It is through them that the regime will disseminate its propaganda in relation to the former '*agrarian reform that had been carried out in the country based on a simple redistribution of the land, by a policy of interior colonization, in which social progress is firstly based in the economic improvement achieved through the execution of the necessary works of transformation of the rural environment'*. (INC, 1964b)

Two groups of execution projects were included in these plans: secondary infrastructures and *pueblos*. The INC established clear guidelines[3] for the new settlements with normative value, both for the urban design and for the functional program of the buildings, divided in three typologies: (1) housing and agricultural annexes for the settlers, (2) handicrafts and commerce, (3) official buildings.

[2] This module corresponds to the most convenient route between the dwelling and the associated land.
[3] One of the most important is the 1949's Circular nº 246

Considering the size and type of the settlements, the plan determines which equipment to build, administrative and social services to support the settlers, as well as the number of handicrafts and commerce. However, there is always a common denominator in all of them: the church with its vertical bell-tower visible from afar is a modern architectural landmark that confers specific identity of each one of them.

The 'Plan of Works' also determines the formal composition of the main square that materializes the civic centre, in the sense of creating representativeness and image of impact.

The general instructions (formal and functional) laid down by the INC directly to the urban matrix, namely differentiated circulation for carts and livestock and for pedestrians, housing typologies for settlers or the placement for the civic centre and the composition of its public buildings have resulted in a somewhat rigid matrix regarding the design of these settlements.

These orders of an alleged homogeneity seem not to be dissociated from the main objective of the regime to implement a nationalist policy of colonization recognizable in the new rural landscape deeply transformed for this purpose.

Almost all the *pueblos* situated in the Tagus valley were located on flat topography[4], and the layout of the villages has been projected in such a way as to involve the least possible amount of earthmoving. They were characterized by a regular layout with an orthogonal grid of streets, lots, blocks and a central square, resulting from the application of the INC guidelines.

Consequently, architects were faced with the problem of the rigid structure of the grid planning imposed by the rectangular shapes of the parcels. Thus, most of them tested some diverse urban forms as an attempt to avoid '*the depressing monotony'* of the *checkerboard*[5].

In Vegaviana, an experience without parallel or continuity was tested, in which the settlement was incorporated in a clear intention with the landscape. The pre-existing vegetal material, particularly the traditional oaks of the zone but also

[4] Belvis del Jarama, Rincón de Ballesteros or Pradochano are some of exceptions.
[5] Bernuy (1946), Talavera la Nueva, Talavera la Nueva or Pradochano.

the undergrowth (red lavender or thyme) was used as an instrument to organize the public space. The '*project aims to conserve the general present appearance of the site and its surroundings as much as possible, and its urban layout has been designed to respect wooded areas inside the village.*' (Fernández del Amo, 1954)

However, these different design experiences '*there is a formal unity and a coherence of language between housing and facilities, resulting from a predefined process: the same architect was in charge of the general planning [...] In addition, the systematic geometry of volumes and the use of white walls [...] is an attempt towards a rationalist architecture.*' (Cardoso et. al, 2018.)

Civic Centres: places of representation

Based on its dimension, the INC established two categories for the new settlements.

Rural nucleus **or** ***aldea*** for 25 to 35 settlers' houses with its agricultural annexes. The official buildings included a convertible school in chapel, the teacher's house and a small administrative building. '*For an initial population of 150 to 200 inhabitants, one can satisfy his [*the settler] *most elemental spiritual and learning requirements*.' (Tamés Alarcón, 1948, p.423)

Pueblo for 80 to 150 houses with a broader and self-sufficient administrative and social program: *Ayuntamiento* [Town hall], Church, Social Building for recreation and cinema, *unitarian* schools, *Hermandad Sindical* [Union building], Hogar Rural, place of ideological orientation for the Youth Front of the National Movement, houses for INC's technicians, doctor and teachers and 10% of traders and craftsmen.

The civic centre was a mandatory requirement of the programme, materialized in a geometric place located in a central area, where the streets depart and structure the urban pattern, with the Church and the *Ayuntamiento* standing on its main axis in line with the roads. '*If the pueblo is in the landscape as a mass*

densification built, the square recognizes itself in the urban mass because it is a 'void' inside the constructed one.' (Flores Soto, 2013a, p.144)

Comparing the INC's main guidelines with the different phases of its implementation, one will allow framing common factors or different experiences within traditional references and modernity, in the planning schemes in the Tagus valley case study.

In the 1940s, throughout its formation phase and with the technical staff in consolidation, the plans were based on an ancestral reference structure – the *Plaza Mayor* [Main Square] and an uniform gridiron layout, whose formalization seeks to rely on the traditional architecture of the region '*absorbing and understanding its good features*, *both in constructive and aesthetic order*.' (Tamés Alarcón, 1948, p.423)

In Bernuy, a 1946's small *pueblo* for 36 settlers, Jiménez Varea concentrates in the Civic Centre the set of all official buildings. '*The small size of the village makes it impossible to separate the civil area from the religious area, and these two spaces have been combined to form the typical Main Square* […] *made as representative as possible.*' (Jiménez Varea, 1946).

Figure 1. Bernuy, Jiménez Varea ©Mediateca MAGRAMA

Its almost square form encloses three of its fronts in a volumetric set in which '*an attempt has been made to keep the facades of the square as compact as possible.*' (Jiménez Varea, *op. cit*) The continuous portico stabilizes the composition of the facades and reinforces the scenic character of this space, similar to a *Plaza-Mayor*, '*which is envisaged as a meeting point and place for relaxation.'* (Jiménez Varea, *op. cit*)

In this proposal the settlers' houses are also part of its composition. Usually selected the typologies with two floors, due to volumetric scale issues, they are located in continuous front or in the corners. This solution will be frequently adopted in a clear intention to join the housing in the settlement, thus differentiating the Spanish matrix from other contemporary experiences of internal colonization.

At the turn of the decade, in 1951, Fernández del Amo, in Belvis del Jarama, explores a new civic centre organization, partly induced by the rugged topography along of the hill. An organic layout with the physical separation of the Church and the Town Hall into places of representation of religious and civil power, divided by the main access, was implemented. Symbolically they '*will occupy the most prominent position at the highest point. The Civic Area will be built at the top, presided by the church and with the bell tower standing at the end of this central entrance thoroughfare*.' (Fernández del Amo, 1951)

In fact, this decade begins a second more operative phase with most of the *pueblos* to be designed and constructed and the plots to be distributed to the settlers.

An important reference was Torre de la Reina (Sevilha), a *model pueblo* to be followed, designed in 1952 by Tames Alarcon, in which he put into practice his guidelines while director of the INC's Architecture Service[6]. The civic centre confined in a semi-enclosed geometric central square, the official buildings connected through a continuous *portico* in reference to the traditional scheme of *plaza* and *calle mayor* with visual emphasis into the bell-tower, the hierarchy of

[6] Created in 1941, it was its director, the architect Germán Valentín-Gamazo until 1943, author of Puebla de Argeme (1957, Cáceres). Subsequently Jose Tames Alarcon assumed its direction until its extinction in 1971

the circulation system or even the framed perspectives can be found in many of the settlements of the Tagus valley. Such as Alberche del Caudillo (Jiménez Varea, 1952), La Moheda (1953) and Talavera la Nueva (1954) by César Casado de Pablos, Rincón de Ballesteros (Carlos Sobrini Marín, 1953) or Rosalejo (José Manuel González Valcárcel,1956).

The central square is also marked by a scenic interest in social representation in which '*The INC encourages social life in the new pueblos by establishing sports competitions and fiestas patronales* [patron saint festivals].' (INC, 1964b)

In a different approach, some experiences of a more *decomposed* and less closed civic centre were tested. The official, religious and craftsmen's buildings are not always in a compacted group, yet they organize courtyards or open spaces of influence, usually linked by green zones, to form a civic, religious and commercial area clearly identifiable. Miramontes (1956) and Barquilla de Pinares (1957) by Agustín Delgado de Robles y Velasco, Santa Maria de las Lomas (Rafael de la Fuente et al., 1957), Tiétar del Caudillo (Pablo Pintado Riba, 1957) or Valdesalor (Jiménez Varea, 1960) were some examples in which levels of modernity were achieved.

This leads to an architecture that acts as "mediation" between the representation of the symbolic space of the regime propaganda (the rules) and the space of an integrated use (appropriation).

Meanwhile, a group of INC's architects such as Alexandro de la Sota, Fernández del Amo or Jose Antonio Corrales motivated by other concerns will reconsider the connection between tradition an modernity into a new perspective. The '*search for a more abstract urban form to accompany the modernization of the vernacular made sure that the grid and the closed urban block could abandon its absolute character and be replaced by more organic schemes and closer relations between city and nature.*' (Lejeune, 2006, p. [6])

This organic integration between the part and the whole, now transposed to the civic centre and settlement relationship, is fundamental to the morphology of Vegaviana (1954, Fernández del Amo). In accordance, the '*public buildings appear exempt within the greater space that sustains the civic centre. Although*

the place no more functions as closed, or delimited, its buildings maintain their uniqueness, and the symbolic referents.' (Álvaro Tordesillas & Meiss, 2013, p.41).

Figure 2. Vegaviana, Fernandez del Amo ©Mediateca MAGRAMA

A last phase arises from the middle of the 1960s until the extinction of the INC in 1971. '*The rigid schemes of the beginning, the geometric definition of the image and perimeter, gave rise to greater flexibility into the its geometry, unity and closure, though the gestures that make the square recognizable in the urban set remain invariant*.' (Flores Soto, 2013a, p.150).

The *dematerialization* of the civic centre has the purpose of expressing a physical and visual relation to the whole urban fabric through *space transition* (open *porticos*) or spaces of opening in reference to other official buildings.

In Pradochano (1965, Agustín Delgado de Robles y Velasco) the central religious, social and administrative area is positioned at the highest point of the *pueblo* and is surrounded by a wide public space (green and paved) that articulates organically with the structure of the main circulation axes. Another characteristic of this implantation is the visual relation between pueblo and cultivated field that in previous phases was surrounded by a green belt.

Figure 3. Pradochano, A. D. de Robles y Velasco © Ayuntamento

Spanish contributes to Southern European inner colonization

Spain and Italy have a major place in the modern inner colonization, particularly in Southern European process, with its roots in the 19th century and even before it.

However, it was the Italian Pontine Marches colonization process that played a key role as a model to be followed. There are some relates of Portuguese and Spanish technicians' visits to its new towns and settlements, and the rhetoric of their civic centres were also well known. The civic centre is hierarchical set of the official buildings: the *Casa del Fascio* and the Church, schools, services and housing for technicians, teachers and doctors, clearly autonomous in relation to the settlers' houses, built in their agricultural plots along the main accesses, conforming a type of a dispersed settlement.

This urban scheme model can be found in Libya's Italian colonization settlements and in some of the Portuguese cases, such as the agricultural colony of Gafanha.

However, it was the visit to the Spanish Badajoz Plan that converts Portuguese technicians to the benefits of a concentrated model for the settlements.

In fact, a compact scheme surrounded by agricultural plots, instead of a dispersed one, had already been proposed and debated in Spain, even before

the formation of the INC. Greece also chose this type when, in the 1920s, was confronted with the necessity of host c. 1,2 million people, resulting from the compulsory exchange of minorities between Greece and Turkey.

We don't know yet, if the Greek case was known by Spanish architects, but in both cases the grid as a settlement layout solution is dominant, always with a square associated to collective facilities, as core of the village.

One can easily understand the presence of the square in almost all inner colonization villages of south Europe, as it was deeply rooted in their tradition. The exception is the Portuguese case, were the colonization settlements civic centre is frequently less defined with fewer communitarian services as well.

With different significances, school and church are often presents. Nevertheless, the alphabetization and educational mission of Portuguese, Spanish and Italian school is different from the Greek case that had the huge role of *Hellenization* of a culturally Turkish population. The same happen with the church, ancestral place of devotion for all, but also sign of national identity in the Greek case.

Final Remarks

The agricultural inner colonization in South Europe share with different levels of combination, layout solutions and implantation schemes in which the civic centre has an important role as the core of the settlement life and space of its identity.

However, when we talk about identity issues in relation to these new settlements, different perceptions come around. In Spain, one can talk about the civic centre has one of the major elements of identification of the village in its singularity among others, while identity in Greece has a broader meaning about the signs of belonging to a larger community, it means, Greece as homeland.

In all cases, the civic centre acts symbolically both as a stage for central and institutional power representation and as a space that generates a sense of sharing, in an outline of nationalism expression.

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THE SETTLEMENTS' DESIGN OF THE BOALHOSA'S AGRICULTURAL COLONY. A dialectical perspective: between tradition and the construction of modernity.

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Abstract

The design of the settlement in the Agricultural Colony of Boalhosa results from an understanding that privileges compact solutions, making the most of the conditions of the topography and respecting the morphology of the natural landscape. In turn, the architectures associated with this design were designed taking advantage of these conditions, considering them as a fundamental data of the preexistence. However, this understanding did not fail to concern itself with the principles of modern architecture, thus seeking solutions capable of establishing a relationship of continuity between tradition and innovation, between the roots of the vernacular and the paradigm of the modern. By valuing the site's specificities and exploring new technical possibilities, this search adopts a strategy that is typical of Critical Regionalism, to mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived indirectly from the peculiarities of a particular place (Frampton, 1983). Not excluding possible relationships with notable examples of the movements Garden City and City Beautiful, in the urban and architectural solution seems to prevail, above all, an attitude of adaptation to the place and agreement with the materials and language of the region.

Keywords: Agriculture colonies, Settlements design, Housing, Modern Architecture, Portuguese Architecture.

The Agricultural Colony of Boalhosa was designed and built during the Salazar regime under the guidance of the Internal Colonization Board (Junta de Colonização Interna - JCI), an organism specifically created for the management of the agrarian reform in Portugal. This colony is a singular experience because it was one of the last agricultural colonies to be settled in the final period of the colonization process, thus representing the culmination of a process of research, experiments and trials for diverse forms, in order to find an ideal settlement model for the rural territory, based on the balance between built and agricultural and natural spaces, following the ideologies of the regime and the socioeconomic

efficiency. Further, it is also an exemplary case regarding the way it was formalized.

The relationship established between the settlement and the place of the colony, and between the settlement's choice and the geographical circumstance, allowed the ability to interpret the pre-existence and to dialogue with the topographical conditions and other widely visible components of the natural landscape. In addition, is recognizable a careful approach based on the use of the traditional methods and materials of the region, both in the settler's dwellings and in the public facilities, together with a formal experimentalism that produces elements of modernity, aiming to find a more modern expression, able to represent the regime and the economic development instruments in order to revive the country.

The Boalhosa's colony, together with the colonies carried out under the general internal colonization project, would enable a colonization model suitable for the expansion of the industrial agriculture, thus contributing for the application in Portugal of the "green revolution" solutions which were transforming the rural territories in the nearby countries (Freire, 2011). Additionally, it was expected that such projects could turn into a spreading focus of the technological innovations that would contribute to improve the practices of conventional farmers (Freire, 2014). In this sense, the design of the settlement as well as the organization and expression of their buildings, have early assumed a strategic importance to achieve these objectives. However, it's worth mentioning that this need to find a plan to re-use the land and to build a new rural society is also an opportunity to think about the urban planning and the architectural issues.

The Boalhosa settlement adopted the "concentrated" model (Girão, 1941), and follows a strategy that gave preference to group solutions, considered more advantageous both for the use and location of the farming land, and for the greater proximity to the collective services and facilities. The Lobo and Antunes' study, which argued that in rural areas the house grouping should be preferential in order to mitigate a series of deficiencies consequent of the buildings isolation and the lack of basic infrastructure and collective facilities (Lobo & Antunes, 1960) was subsequently validated following the completion of the Internal Colonization Board projects.

By adopting this type of solution, the colony's agricultural *casais* were compose by several plots organized in order to form more compact neighbourhoods, however not in the same way as population clusters or urbanized settlements with adequate infrastructure and collective facilities. The configuration of the settlements has, however, a certain urban complexity, which seems influenced by models originated in the garden city and the design of its structure is organized in order to define a spatial system constituted by streets and square, in order to reinforce the unity of the settlement and promote a community environment. The location of the streets and buildings follows directly the contour lines, thus taking full advantage of the topographic conditions, minimizing the earthworks and conserving the natural landscape morphology (Figure1).

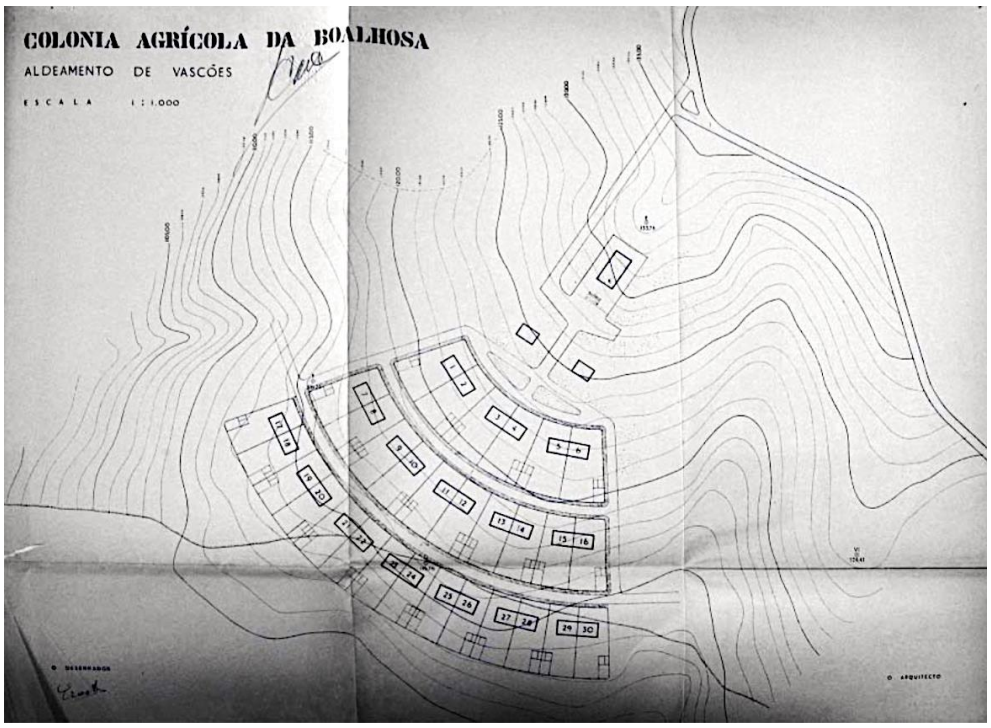

Figure 1. Plan of the settlement. Boalhosa Agricultural Colony. *Junta de Colonização Interna, 1956.*

By taking advantage of the steep slope of the terrain it was still possible to open the living area towards the south-facing valley. Following this site planning the houses were organized in a semi-detached configuration, including barns and

stables, thus guaranteeing both the rational distribution of spaces and the social and architectural representation of each building.

Regarding the settlement, it was designed and built according to the concentrated model. Unlike the dispersed model, adopted in previous cases, the houses and public facilities are grouped in a single place and separated from the agricultural lands. This configuration was aimed at rationalizing the infrastructural system and, at the same time, strengthening the sense of community, thus forming a small civic centre and a socialization space. The first proposal opted for a open design which indicates the possibility of enlarging the settlement, since the streets are not closed. In the first version of the built proposal, the implementation of the settlement was designed by adapting it into the existing morphological configuration of the land. The design of the streets thus follows the configuration of the contour lines forming a coherent and well-articulated set. The streets, which enclosed the complex and established the connection with the local road network, were realized later, after the elaboration of the urbanization plan, allowing also a more direct connection between the threshing-floor and the settlement, as well as the creation of a new road. The urbanization plan complements the infrastructural works already programmed in the previous project, and introduces significant changes at the urban design level. The square and the central street are widened, thus providing a larger and qualified social space. Trees are planted in the settlement's surrounding turning it more sheltered and better integrated into the landscape. Later, was presented an alteration project of the agricultural facilities of the *casais*, which proposed a new conformation of the streets through the construction of a continuous row to close the southern top of the plots. This project was not carried out.

From the analysis of the supporting texts of the urban and architectural projects of the Colony of Boalhosa, we verified, however, that there is no direct reference to foreign models. The only reference that associates the colonies settlements' model with the garden city was found in the Aldeia Nova do Barroso projects: "*By this way we reduce the danger of fire considerably, with the advantage of giving to the whole the general appearance of a garden village, rather than a simple huddle of uninteresting houses*." (JCI, 1944, p. 58). Nevertheless, it seems consensual in the bibliographical references found on this subject

(Fernandes, 2003; Ramos, 2005; Rapazote, 2012; Guerreiro, 2015) the idea that the settlements are related with the model of the garden city, as well as the fact that there are a set of aspects that seem to relate the Portuguese colonies settlements with it, including the use of an organic design adapted to the topography. Not excluding the possibility that certain international references may have served as an example or influenced some aspects of their urban and architectural design, it seems to us, however, that in the specific case of the Boalhosa colony other factors were more determinants. One is the meticulous observation of the place by the designers, who spent several days camped there to better understand their natural conditions and qualities, which also explains the careful geographical location of the settlement (Guerreiro, 2015). Another is the reading and interpretation of the spatial and architectural references existing in the region, in order to find a design and scale suited to the settlement's size, as well as an architectural expression resulting from the articulation of the modernist principles with the regional specificity, revealing signs of modernism and a certain proximity to the critical regionalism of the fifties.

As in other colonies of the Internal Colonization Board, in the architectures of the colony of Boalhosa were applied principles that considered the regional specificities and the particular conditions of the site. In addition to the consideration taken with matters regarding architectural expression, organisation and sizing, the projects and subsequent constructions make use of regional building techniques and materials with the intention of achieving lower construction costs and guaranteeing building quality. The housing and agricultural facilities are arranged into a single volumetric unit that can be regarded as a rational whole while also permitting greater representativeness from an architectural and social point of view. Compared with the residential buildings of the first colonies of Milagres and Martim Rei, which were simpler in their compositional design and with a certain superficiality in the use of the regional variations, those of Boalhosa reinterpret better the spatial organization models of the rural buildings of the region, managing to obtain also an image of greater constructive solidity. However, they did not manage to provide a definitive answer to the premises raised in "The Problem of the Portuguese House" (Távora, 1947). A total of five projects were developed for houses of the

Boalhosa colony, from which only one was full realized and used to built the houses of the Vascões settlement. The first of these projects, designed in 1946 by the architect Maurício Trindade Chaga, was developed after a phase of research and experimentation in the first colonies of the Internal Colonization Board, which lasted approximately a decade. In this project are renewed the basic assumptions applied on the design of the first houses associated with the dispersed settlement model. The adoption of the concentrated model imposes not only the compaction of the settlement, but also of its buildings, by connecting the agricultural dependencies and stables with the main volume of the housing. In this case, since it was necessary to define a typified solution for the colony using references to the characteristics of region rural dwellings, the envisaged architectural language was strongly marked by the use of materials and construction techniques of the traditional northern buildings. In the following project of 1954, designed by the architect Henrique Albino for the dwellings of the Vascões settlement, the typology becomes semi-detached and the buildings are reorganized in order to adapt to the local topography and to give relevance to the spaces of familiar conviviality while maintaining the use of the local materials to define their image. The architect José Luiz Pinto Machado produces in 1956 the project that will guide the construction of the Vascões settlement buildings (Figure 2).

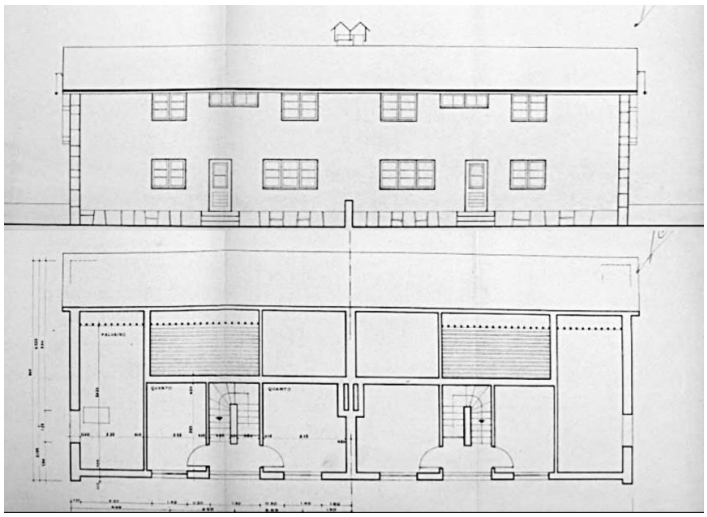

Figure 2. Plan and elevation of the main volume of the *Casal*.Project by architect José Luiz Pinto Machado. Boalhosa Agricultural Colony. *Junta de Colonização Interna, 1956.*

The solution found follows the premises of the previous project, adopting the semi-detached type and paying special attention to the relationship between the buildings and the place. However, compared with the previous project, the spatial, formal and functional options are clearly distinct and more appropriate. Not only they allow a greater rationalization of the dimensions of the inner spaces and a better articulation between housing and agricultural function, but also, they present a more balanced and coherent volumetric solution, combining in a single and continuous volume a unitary structure integrating the living and the working spaces, separating only the facilities for the treatment of the residues. After the 1958's fourth project, designed by the architect José Neves de Oliveira for the houses of the Lameira do Real settlement, the last proposal for the extension of the Vascões settlement buildings will be developed in 1960, foreseeing an increase in the agricultural structures that are separated from the house, once again resorting to the use of stone for the external walls in order to obtain a certain consistency with the previous project.

The architecture of the houses built for the settlement of Boalhosa seems to have been formalized on the basis of a similar compromise to the one used by the Carlos Ramos generation (Almeida and Maia, 1986, 112). In reality, this compromise seems more focused on reconciling functional needs with local aspects, and less on the singular mediation between tradition and modernity, being the modern component introduced in the public facilities architectural design. Like in the case of other colonies, such as Barroso, this mediation does, indeed, appear in the public facilities, where it is recognizable the use of modern vocabulary references, namely in the Primary School and in the Teacher's House. The first of these buildings combines two volumes at right angles, forming a simple and rational geometric composition, sized and organized to receive the essential characteristics and take advantage of the sun exposure. The roofs are flat and slightly sloping, while the windows facing the external courtyard are open to the ground level, showing the presence of a distinct language from the traditional one, which is used on the surfaces of the stonewalls (Figure 3).

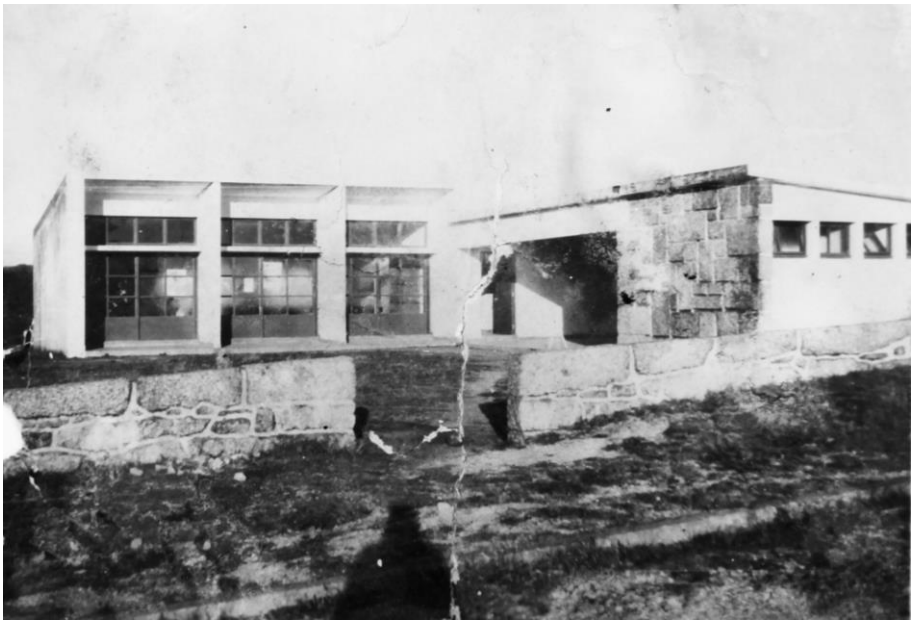

Figure 3. Primary school photographed in 1964. Boalhosa Agricultural Colony © *Municipal Archive of Paredes de Coura.*

In the second of these buildings the functional organization and the solar orientation are maintained. The roof takes the traditional tilted form, however, there are elements of modern architecture, although some of them have been modified before the execution of the project, such as the living room window, which has been replaced by a door and a window. On the first floor, the vertical and horizontal planes of the balconies are projected outwards, highlighting the geometric values of the rooms' windows and providing, at the same time, a shadow and privacy (Figure 4).

In the only unbuilt public facility, the Vascões settlement chapel, seems at first sight that the modernist distinctive features are no longer included, substituted by a simple and essential attitude, less experimental and disinterested in mediation between traditional and modern. However, analysing carefully the building's architectural drawings, it can be observed that these distinctive features exist, even if apparently diminished by the stone masonry that, contrasting with the simplicity of the white walls, enhance the "(...) architectural taste of the region (...) "(Sequeira, 1952, p.3).

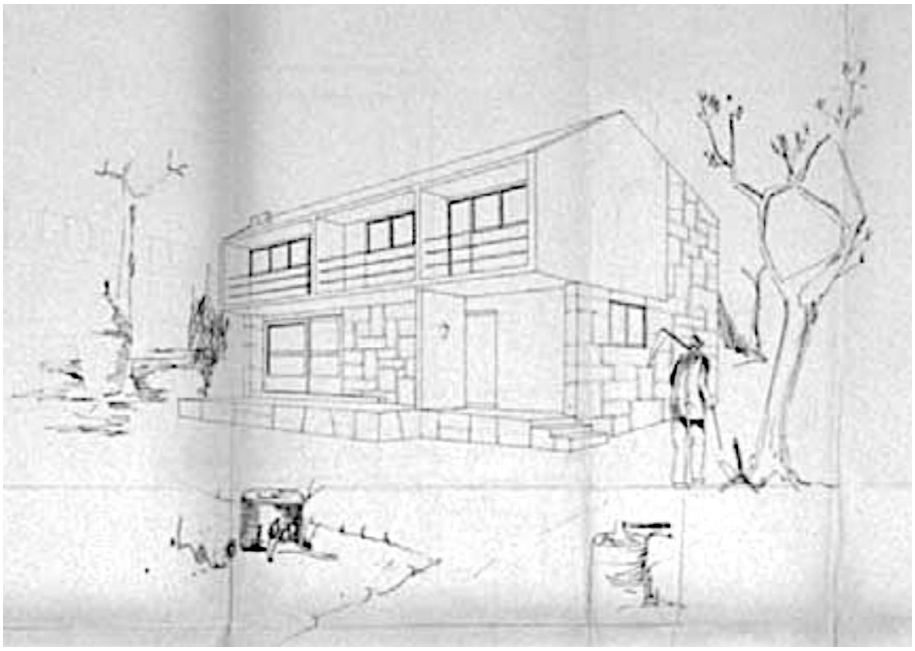

Figure 4. Teacher's house by architect António Trigo. Boalhosa Agricultural Colony*. Junta de Colonização Interna, 1957.*

The layout of the chapel, although rooted in the sensibility of tradition, unveils a purified and balanced solution of pure and straight forms. These forms are the geometric generators that determine and order the architectural, aesthetic and structural genesis of this building. The elevations confirm the premises of the plan, showing a single volume composition, whose symmetry is broken by the sacristy and baptistery lateral volumes. The asymmetric effect in the front elevation results from the distance of the bell tower from the main façade. This architectural element comes from the vertical extension of the stonewall of the Baptistery, thus forming a distinct solution from those adopted in other colonies, where the towers are normally incorporated and placed in the main façade.

The public facilities followed the same assumptions used for the construction of the residential buildings, namely the logic of organization and use of space used in the architecture of the rural environment, as well as the inclusion of regional materials to ensure an economically sustainable construction and formal solutions adapted to the climatic characteristics of the region. However, in these cases the architectural expression is oriented towards a new direction, aimed at

building a language attentive to the integration of modern values and develop an exact conscience of that time, on which it was already discussed whether it would actually have been possible to relate the formal and functional aspects of tradition with those of modern architecture. In this sense, it is worth mentioning that in conjunction with the completion of the 1956 project mentioned above, proposals were presented for contemporary rural habitats based on innovative urban and architectural hypotheses, whose buildings design revisited vernacular construction techniques while remaining faithful to tradition[1].

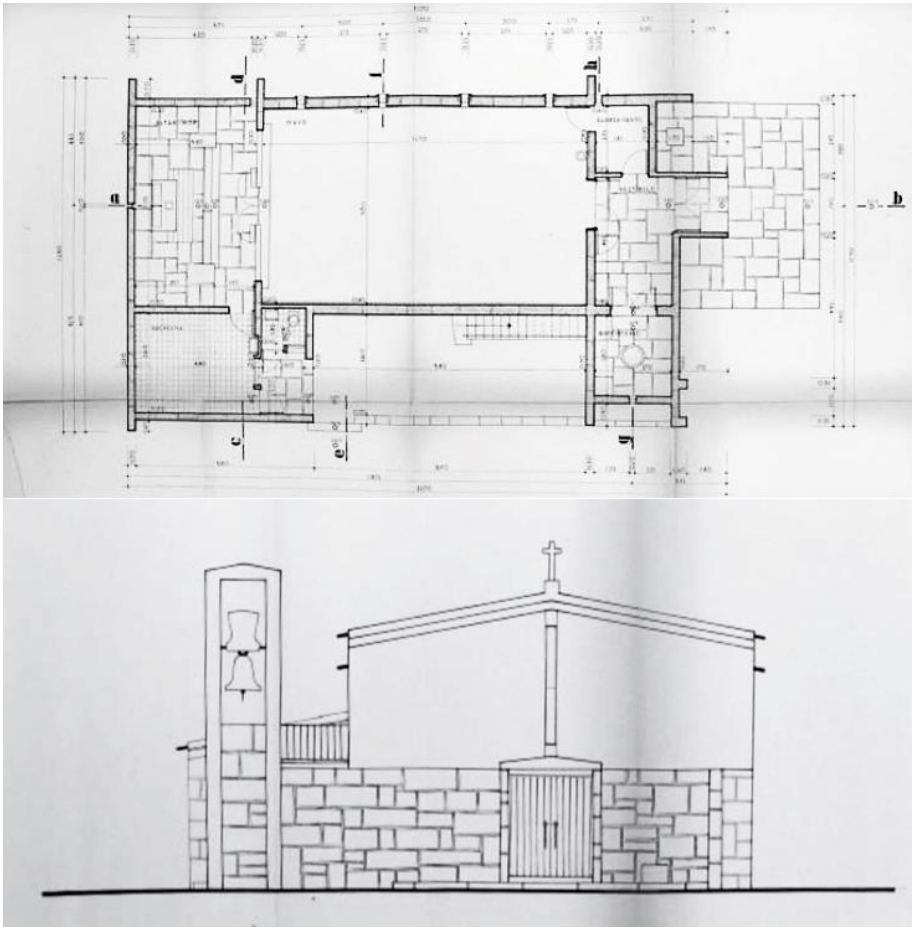

Figure 4. Elevation and plan of the Chapel. Project by architect António Trigo. Boalhosa Agricultural Colony*. Junta de Colonização Interna, 1960*

[1] Project presented in 1956 in Dubrovnik at the tenth CIAM congress – Group CIAM Porto – Portugal. "Habitat Rural".

The characteristics described up to now, which demonstrate the use of critical regionalism design approaches and the use of an architectural language of mediation between traditional and modern, represent the distinctive elements of the urban and architectural design of the Boalhosa settlement. The achievement of these results is due not only to the research and experimentation carried out through the projects and the construction of the first colonies of the JCI, but also and above all to the application of a specific design method. Apart from considering the guidelines regarding the selection of the settlement model, this method was developed from the direct contact of the architects with the place, through a careful examination of the topographic features and of the landscape. Taking advantage of the fact that the design solutions had to be renewed several times, the method tries to define an alternative architectural language of mediation, anticipating issues that will be developed and deepened after the Portuguese Popular Architecture survey.

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ITALIANS NEW TOWNS AS AN EXPERIMENTAL TERRITORY FOR THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN ITALY.
The case study of Oriolo Frezzotti and his architecture for public facilities in Littoria, Sabaudia and Pontinia.

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Abstract

During the 30's, the Fascist Party achieves its most significant territorial project: the reclamation of the Pontine Marshes and the construction of New Towns.

In the same years starts the debate between modernity and tradition, that will characterize the whole history of modern Italian architecture, and the Fascist party obtains its highest approval trying to breathe life into a new Italian society full of new behaviours. This opens a new parenthesis within the debate of modern Italian architecture that not only has to find its own definition but must also be translated as State's art. In this scenario, the founding cities of the Agro Pontino became the experimental territory for the Italian architects of the Modern era. The pivotal architect of the New Towns was Oriolo Frezzotti, chosen directly by Mussolini to build in 1932 the first new town, Latina, with a rural character and then in 1935, Pontinia where the architect abandoned the vernacular style to leave space to pure geometric shapes. So Frezzotti, in just two years, changed his language almost drastically, abandoning the architectural forms linked to the traditional rural style and approaching the "horizontal lines", symbol of architecture for human, and the "vertical lines" symbol of dictatorial monumentalism (Zevi 1950, 167) that will characterize the modern Italian architecture. To give the impetus for this transformation was the experience that Frezzotti made in 1934 collaborating on the project for Sabaudia known as the city of Italian rationalism. In light of this, this paper intends to analyse these urban artefacts understood as a tool capable of returning a material history of modern Italian architecture. So, through the urban and architectural analysis of the New towns, so through the study of the debate between rurality and monumentality, this paper intends to give a generic picture of modern Italian architecture.

Keywords: Oriolo Frezzotti; Public Buildings; Modern architecture; Fascist New Towns; Fascist Architecture

Introduction

The modern Italian architecture evolves into an environment full of contradictions due to a policy aimed to acquiring the maximum consensus [1]. Architecture therefore becomes the political means used by Mussolini to involve and impress the people. What is in fact well known within historiography, and according to P. Nicoloso, is how the architecture is able to set in motion *formative processes of identity* [2] (2011: XVI).

However, we are witnessing to another step forward made by fascism with compared to contemporary totalitarian regimes: architecture is not used by the Regime only as an instrument to attract consensus, (since it is capable of shaking the economic system and solving some of the main social problems such as the urbanization and the displacement due to the lack of housing) but becomes the tool used by Mussolini to educate the mass. So, architecture becomes *a totalitarian experiment* [3]. (Nicoloso, p. XXVII) It doesn't matter therefore if the architecture is modern or traditional. It is important that it is Italian and in which Italians can see their ideals mirrored. To reflect these ideals will be able once the rationalist architecture - to such an extent that Pagano

[1] Not unlike what happens in other European nations under totalitarian regime, even in the Italian case it is fundamental to retrace the history of modern architecture and urban planning, focusing in particular on the debate and the relationship between architecture and politics. That it means focusing on the relationship between architects and fascism.

[2] *"Architecture has always played a fundamental role in the formative process of identity. The architectural monument has the ability to transmit meanings capable of reaching a whole community, which in it then comes to be recognized. [...] This determines the transition from an architecture instrument of consent to an instrument of education. An architecture that educates the masses must have clear forms, understandable by everyone. It is therefore necessary to "invent" a style that, without renouncing the characters of modernity, speaks to the memory of the nation, which is a synthesis of that classical tradition that had its original splendour in ancient Rome. [Architecture] must be able to unite all Italians, now in the present, but also in a historical perception. In which the reference to classicism, a common feature of Italian art, will have to highlight its eternal character and universalistic vocation. Again, as in the past, through architecture we want to affirm the primacy of Italian civilization in the world. "* (Nicoloso, p. XV)

[3] *"It is Mussolini's will to let architecture participate in the totalitarian experiment. To educate the people more dramatically, to involve them in the new mysticism, the architectural symbols of the secular religion of fascism must have some common artistic traits.*
[...] A complex strategy, a skilful and political management of architecture is outlined, which does not lose sight of the ultimate goal, which is not the destiny of the discipline, even if more and more organic to the regime. It is only a means, however essential, to realize the construction of a "new civilization" and of the "new" fascist man, which will have to establish itself in the West. " (Nicoloso, p. XXVII)

himself, in one of his articles G. (Pagano, 1934) would designate the Duce as the saviour of modern Italian architecture - and in another time will be the traditionalist architecture, made of arches, *static and trumpet* symbolizing *a return to "Romanity"" (*Zevi, 1950, p. 167). Therefore, architecture isn't important as it is itself, but is important as an instrument capable of transmitting the sense of fascist power in the present and in the future.[4]

It is no coincidence then if the architects who are going to build in this period will be almost exclusively Italians. Even Le Corbusier, who in the 1930s already enjoyed a particular reputation, failed to leave his mark in Italy. In fact, he tried several times to get in touch with Mussolini presenting also some personal projects for the realization of Pontinia without obtaining any success.[5]

It is in this climate that the need to define an architecture as state's art should be defined. To this end, a series of articles are published in the most important architecture magazines, where the architects try to give a precise definition not of modern architecture but of Fascist architecture. But what were to be the main characteristics of fascist architecture?

To understand its reasons and significance it is necessary to analyse the value of rationalist architecture and traditionalist architecture from a political point of view. On the one hand the rationalist architects line up with the modern architecture made of mass-produced reproduction, made up of canons, fixed and repeatable elements, which precisely because of their ability to grow mechanically and independently risked to escaping from the totalitarian control

[4] *Cfr.* P. M. Bardi (1931) "Rapporto sull'architettura per Mussolini" in *Critica Fascista*, p. 131 *"Building for Fascism means "to stay". A fortunate effort awaits the generation of today, in all the pictures of national activity: but it is certainly to the builders that the most delicate task is entrusted: forming with the consistency of stone, cement, steel and the noblest and most enduring elements of nature and ingenuity, with a breath of Italian art, the gigantic footprint of Mussolini, so that posterity will be amazed"*

[5] *"In light of this failure to meet with Le Corbusier, it is then to mark not only the divergence of the Duce from the most conservative and intransigent positions supported by Farinacci, but also to indicate his clear opposition to a modern architecture not due to a political discourse nationalist type. He is not in favour of modern architecture, which is a supranational phenomenon. On the other hand, it is willing to support architecture that is figuratively referring to the values of Italianisms, which lends itself to the needs of its politics. It uses architecture if it assigns a national face to modernity, if it is useful for consolidating the identity of Italians. It is not therefore within a stylistic question that its action is placed, but within an instrumental use of the discipline. Thus, after having exalted its modernity, it uses it - on the opposite side - to give vigour and extension to the myth of Romanity."* (Nicoloso, p. 85)

of the State and consequently it's sort of frowned upon. On the other hand, we find the supporters of traditional architecture, who proposed an architecture rich in classical references. These references are, however translated into an almost total abandonment of modern efficiency, a detail that could not be neglected since the regime had to prove its own power and modernity.

So we are witnessing to the rise of an architecture based mostly on a political rather than ideological vision, on a communicative rather than functional vision; an architecture where the hierarchy of spaces and the treatment of facades has nothing to do with the intended use (it is no coincidence that they are found on buildings written as "school" or "power plant" that clarify the intended use); an architecture where the vernacular is reinterpreted in a monumental key to become itself the *mausoleum of the state.* (Mariani, 1976, p.132); an architecture capable of representing the State through the definition of its own style: The Eclectic Monumentalism[6].

Propaganda, Architecture and Urban Design

One of the greatest propaganda interventions carried out by the Fascist regime, using architecture and urban planning as tools for involving the masses, was the reclamation of the Agro Pontino. The construction of the new towns and the construction of the villages, within the reclaimed territory, becomes crucial as formal experiments carried out by the architects and the State. The E42 in Rome, and the national planning law will be born from this experimental experience. It is therefore easy to understand the importance of these urban artefacts that today represent an open-air tale of the history of modern Italian architecture. The new towns and the villages connected to them, are the

[6] *"Their result [of the traditionalist architects] came much closer to what Mussolini meant by architecture, by city, than moderns proposed; his biological reading of his history, his adherence to the criterion of the cycles of civilizations, ended when alienated from the earth, imposed on him considerations and parameters much more sensitive to the idea of the great style intended as an element of growth like a plant, which not for a more or less articulated, but intellectual and cumbersome system.*
The meaning of an architecture that was not in fact neither classical nor really traditional, nor national, but only Monumental Eclectism or better Eclectic Monumentalism, gave Mussolini the possibility of creating spaces in which to gather that "rural civilization" that was partially building. " (Mariani, pp. 132-133)

calligraphic evolution of Italian architecture. They are precise signs, recognizable but variable at the same time, each one different from the other. And it is precisely through the reading of this diversity and this variation in the architectural production of the public buildings of the Fascist New Town, which is intended to describe the birth and evolution of modern Italian architecture.

The collective building within the newly founded cities and rural villages is particularly important because -in addition to demonstrating the difficulty of reinterpreting the urban projects of fascism[7]- the foundation of the new towns takes place through their realization. Residential buildings are in fact, for most, excluded[8].

In all the fascist new towns, therefore, are the collective building which dictates the volumetric conformation of the urban project, and not the residential one[9]. So, it becomes fundamental to analyse the architecture of these urban buildings by observing their formal and stylistic evolution.

The architect of Fascist New Town: Oriolo Frezzotti

The hand that will guide most of the projects of the newly founded cities is the one of Oriolo Frezzotti [10]. He, after the construction of the city of Littoria, took

[7] *Cfr*. Pennacchi in "*Fascio e Martello. Viaggio per le città del Duce:"*. He makes a critique of D. Ghirardo's interpretation of the role of some public collective buildings within the city and the rural village, p. 138

[8] Looking at the original drawings of the urban planning for all the new towns we can easily see that most of the building projected were the public facilities. The houses were just for people who works for the administration. Also, during the opening day there were only the public building.

[9] This is clear if we look the third fascist new town: Pontinia. Especially in this city, the one destined to have the most rural character of all, in the main square overlook the cinema-theatre, the after-work, the hotel, the post office and the Town Hall; on one of the two main axes, that connect the city with the Via Appia, there are in succession the Casa del Fascio and the military barracks, and in the background the imposing Church acts as a scenic backdrop closing the city towards the countryside and river Sisto. Therefore, are public and collective buildings to build the city and its main cornerstones.

[10] Oriolo Frezzotti was born on 7 September 1888 in Rome. He trained and graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts as a pupil of Cyril, firm supporter of traditional architecture, dedicated to the care of detail and architectural interpretation of Italian architecture of previous centuries.
Frezzotti will then be formed on this imprint and enrolled in the Order of Architects in 1928. His first works took place in Rome mainly in urban planning. In fact, he collaborated on the urban layout of the Sebastiani district, creating his own building: Villa Valeria
Not surprising, given its formation, its adhesion to the Barocchetto style characterized by the use for decorative purposes of the architectural motifs of the Baroque style, which developed mainly in

care of the design of some of the most important buildings in Sabaudia and Pontinia. Furthermore, he also actively collaborated on the Aprilia and Pomezia projects. Despite the clamour, he remained mostly outside the debate on modern architecture that took place in those years, remaining always faithful to the academic teaching received. He participated with Luigi Moretti in the competition for the Palazzo del Littorio in Rome.[11] It is with this contest that his name begins to have that minimum of notoriety among the colleagues that allowed him to be indicated by Calza Bini when Cencelli, president of the ONC, asked for an architect not too well known[12] and unrelated to the polemics between the various architectural trends. Frezzotti, not being part of the group of the known architects of the time turned out to be the perfect person to design the first "agro-city" in the reclaimed Pontine marshes: Littoria

Littoria

Built in a few months, from April to December 1932, contrary to what is written in many fictional news articles of the time, Littoria[13] was not designed by Frezzotti in a single night and without any reference to previous urban experiences. In fact, one of the references for the architect was the book

Rome in the 20s. He always made some public buildings in the capital, one in particular it is the Passenger House, built in 1920, near the Termini station. From this building, today in total state of decay it is possible to see the architect's academic style. The references to Renaissance architecture make the whole building a reinterpretation of the fifteenth-century palaces, with the three superimposed orders and the large decorative cornice.
Between the Twenties and Thirties, he participated in numerous competitions for the regulatory plans including Bisagno in 1923, Faenza and Grosseto in 1931, and finally winning the first prize for urban planning of Brignole in Genoa.

[11] The competition for the Palazzo del Littorio in Rome was one of the most important in the history of modern Italian architecture since it consecrates, for the first time, the transition from the conflict between modern architecture and traditionalist architecture, showing the so-called "Littorio" style, that is the eclectic monumentalism characteristic of fascist architecture.

[12] Cfr.: Mariani, R. (1976) *Fascismo e Città nuove*, pp. 87-90 "*Cencelli expressly asks a professional who is not a "character" and who isn't even less involved in any way in the polemics which are already filling the Italian newspapers. The attempt is to get the construction of the new towns pass silently, also because strangely Littoria is still considered a large service village, almost a corollary to land reclamation that remains the true great work. In other words, they don't want to overshadow a rural work with an urban intervention. About Frezzotti as an architect it hasn't been heard much".* See also: Muntoni, A. (1990) "Il Piano di Oriolo Frezzotti" in *Atlante storico delle Città Italiane. Latina*" pp: 10-16 and Cefaly, P. (1984) "*Littoria 1932-1942. Gli architetti e la città"* p. 34.

[13] *"Littoria is particularly significant, as it was the first to develop a completely new settlement strategy, in which the urban center can only be seen within a widespread territorial system, according to a narrow network of roads, canals and farms. service equipment. A model theorized later by V. Testa is able to project some of his most interesting portraits into the urban planning law of 1942."* (Muntoni, 1990, p.7)

published in 1931, by G. Giovannoni: "Old towns and new buildings where was collecting a series of his writings published in 1913 and which will have a strong influence on the generation of professionals to whom also belongs Frezzotti[14]. So we can say that he didn't take a totally counter current road, but was part of the lively national and european debate on urban planning. It should also be stressed that the radiocentric system was the one that best suited the pre-existing areas such as working villages, service roads, but also archaeological sites.

Thus, keeping faith with the Italian town planning tradition and the territorial needs dictated by the pre-existences, Frezzotti develops a radiocentric plant that branches off starting from the rectangular central square. From it start also the main axes that connect Littoria with the sea, the Appian Way and the surrounding rural villages. At first glance these main axes are connected to each other through a system of concentric circumferences, but this is not the case. Looking closely at Frezzotti's drawing, drawn up in 1932, these rings develop following a kind of spiral growing, whose increase is dictated by the system of satellite squares in which the main public buildings overlook. Frezzotti gives life therefore to an extremely dynamic urban system that misidentifies itself with traditional and academic urban experiences. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that in Italy the most important artistic and architectural movement of those times was Futurism, a strong supporter of modernity and of the dynamism it provoked. In the Frezzotti plan everything is dynamic. In the 1932 project the rectangular square is symmetrically cut only by one of the five road axes, and the other four axes are never the diagonal of the rectangle, so they also transmit the sense of dynamism. The search for this continuous movement is "formalized" with the expansion plan of 1935 where the main square, while maintaining its rectangular shape, is transformed, making the only orthogonal axis no longer corresponds to the symmetry axis. Analysing this continuous search for dynamism it would be possible define Littoria as an eccentric more than a concentric city. Eccentric as it is also the layout of the buildings facing the

[14] Frezzotti, in collaboration with Ing. Savoia, will dwell several times on the radial-concentric city system, a model of city that, in the thirties, was internationally recognized as one of the possible choices to be implemented to improve the conditions of the industrial city.

main squares, such as the town hall that is not placed in the middle of the square but in the middle of one of the two halves of the square itself. The town hall building is also only apparently symmetrical. Its bell tower, symbol par excellence of Littoria, in fact, isn't placed at the centre of the large longitudinal element. It should also be remembered that in those years two criteria have been defined: the use of vernacular elements of the past and their monumentalization as a symbol of fascist power and supremacy. The extraordinary nature of Littoria lies in being the framework capable of describing the evolution of these two criteria in a plastic way. We only have to cast our minds back to the Municipal building[15] (Fig. 1) or to the Financial building built only in 1935.

Monumentalizing archetypes was the fundamental element to give life to fascist architecture. In 1932, when Frezzotti designed Littoria, he carried out one of the first experiments in the monumentalizing of traditional archetypes. The portico, which acts as a common thread throughout the project, finds its monumentalizing through horizontal development; arches and friezes are dilated and transformed into decorative elements, finally the tower of the Town Hall becomes the real direct representation of the monumental ruralism of the entire city. In it, Frezzotti inserts typically civic symbols, such as the arch, the bell, the clock and the sculptural decorations to celebrate the birth of the so-called "urban ruralism". And it will be precisely the theme of urban ruralism, declined in a different way, to characterize three main squares: the administrative political centre (Piazza del Littorio), the religious and educational centre (Piazza San Marco); the agricultural centre (Piazza del Quadrato). In all of these three plazas, in fact, the rural tone predominates through the presence of

[15] *"The two-storey building, a portico, with a roof covering, is marked along the central axis by a 32-meter-high tower. At the top of the civic tower an 8 m high bell tower is surmounted by a travertine drum that holds a flagpole. At the top of the tower is accessed by a cantilever staircase in reinforced concrete or by elevator. The entrance to the Town Hall, surmounted by the loggia, is in the body of the tower covered in travertine like the porch ground floor. The façade on the square, regularly marked by 6 windows on each side, is instead treated with brightly coloured plaster. The timbers of the windows that take on a somewhat refined and uncertain aspects do not correspond to the linearity of the central arcade and the ground portico. (Shwartz architecture review year v n 2 February 1933 - XI). On the walls of the antechamber on the first floor, "two tombstones with the speeches of Mussolini and Hon. Cencelli held on the day of the inauguration. From the antechamber leads to the Sala Sella Consulta hall, which was created with marble floors and brown-painted walls, while the ceiling was decorated with a banner depicting the town's coat of arms".* (Muntoni, 1990, p. 75)

predominantly linear buildings, with a maximum of three floors, with a pitched roof and the prospectus marked by a uniform rhythm exceptionally interrupted by the monumental element[16].

Figure 1 O. Frezzotti Littoria, 1932. The Town Hall. Contemporary photo by the author

Littoria, as already mentioned, undergoing a process of expansion in 1935 and administrative transformation (from rural centre the city becomes provincial capital) gathers in itself buildings that show not only the artistic and stylistic evolution of the architect, but also the stylistic evolution of fascist architecture[17]. The search for a refined style within the architectural language of those years is answered by the use of the giant order. The same monumental archetypes used for the projects of the buildings in 1932 are now so overboard that they look, at a first glance, very far from the rural tone of the city. Rural tone that seems to

[16] This "monumental element" could be the civic tower as in the case of the town hall, the entrance arch to the residential buildings or the O.N.B portal; all elements that insert important contrasts within the apparent normality and traditionalist is through the exceptional elements that characterize the public-recreational buildings that it is possible to read the growth and evolution of modern Italian architecture.
[17] As we can see looking the Town All and the near Financial Building: the first one built according to the first urban project is more related with the tradition; the second one, the financial building, belongs to the whole school of the Monumentalismo Eclettico.

be sacrificed in favour of a marked monumentality. Although we witness a clear linguistic transformation, we can also see that these interventions *reveal a remarkable professional capacity and a uniformity of language in the volumetric articulation underlined by the wise use of materials* (Angelucci, 1990. P. 34). To represent this professional skill is, once again, the main square of Littoria. With the expansion project of 1935, the Piazza del Littorio is officially completed with the Financial building (Fig.2). The choice of Frezzotti is to achieve once again a building with a longitudinal plan and only apparently symmetrical. The stylistic evolution of the architect is well represented, however, by the façade solutions and the monumentalization of the portico[18].

Figure 2 O. Frezzotti Littoria, 1935. The Financial building. Contemporary photo by the author

[18] *"The building, which completes the construction of the Piazza del Popolo, in 1936, is affected by the new role of Littoria now elevated from rural Borgo to the provincial capital. The project is part of the square with a monumentality that contrasts with the architectural tone of the pre-existing buildings, bringing the high marble colonnades occupying the central part of the building to the low plastered porticoes. The portico continues lower on the sides of the building surmounted by two floors covered in brick and punctuated by a regular rhythm of windows."* (Muntoni, 1990, p. 76)

Once again, Frezzotti creates a lexical continuity through a calligraphic discontinuity. The archetype element is the same: the portico; the interpretative act of tradition is the same: monumentalization. Only formal expression changes. The portico that in the two side wings is reproposed according to the same proportions of 1932, in the central part is extremized, exasperated. The vertical elements developed according to the giant order give life to a solemn and symbolic architectural element, able to communicate solidity and firmness. Moreover, the gigantic size of the columns allows the construction of a new perspective axis that scenographically opens onto Piazza del Littorio. But what happens between 1932 and 1935? What professional experience will this change the stylistic language of Oriolo Frezzotti? In those years, Frezzotti collaborated in the realization of two other fascist new towns: Sabaudia, in 1934, and Pontinia in 1934-35. In particular, it will be the collaboration with the group of winners of the Sabaudia[19] project that will mark the turning point in the architect's dialectic.

Sabaudia[20]

What is still today recognized as the city of Italian Rationalism, was one of the most successful projects of Fascism. The national debate between modern architecture and traditional architecture seems to have end thanks to Sabaudia's rationalist project, acclaimed by the leading journalistic publications in the sector. Even Pagano, who will never talk too much about the newly founded cities in his own magazine, will use the Sabaudia project to invoke the victory of the architecture of Italian rationalism. [21] It is therefore in the city of rationalism, between metaphysical architectures, that fit the three buildings designed by Frezzotti for Sabaudia (the water tank, the elementary school and the O.N.B. Building). The architect's language apparently seems to have changed

[19] Gino Cancellotti, Eugenio Montuori, Luigi Piccinato e Alfredo Scalpelli, members of the M.I.A.R., the Italian movement for Rational Architecture.
[20] "*Sabaudia, among the new cities was undoubtedly the most interesting from an urban and architectural point of view. [...] A true modern "historical centre" of the new city, the complex of squares and buildings that enclose the various public functions still express today, at best, that urban idea so typical of Italian culture of the 1930s. Echoes of De Chirico's metaphysical painting, we re-read together with the desire for a rationalization of spaces and functions that are not the same in other Italian cities of the same period. The particular and sought-after relationship with the natural dimension of the place has then found the possibility of an insertion of various buildings in that unique landscape context [...]"* (Muratore, 1999, p. 35)
[21] *Cf*r.: "Mussolini salva l'architettura italiana" in *Casabella* n. 78, 1934; and "Architettura italiana dell'anno XIV" in *Casabella*, n. 95

completely. The linear building, linked to the rural tradition, is almost completely abandoned in favour of a more complex planimetric and volumetric composition. The play of volumes is emphasized by the use of materials and façade decorations.

Moreover, unlike what happens in Latina, the facades and the elevations are not treated as two-dimensional elements and completely unrelated to the plant, intentionally designed to draw only a specific set design. In the buildings designed by Frezzotti for Sabaudia, the façade takes shape through the different volumetric development of the geometric figures that make up the plan. A clear example of this is the building of the primary school[22] (Fig. 3), today a forest rangers barracks and the one designed for the O.N.B.[23] (Fig. 4).

The Rationalist experience of Frezzotti, however, remains perhaps enclosed in the building of the elementary school of Sabaudia where it will not include, apart from the portico, any stylistic and formal reference to the architectural elements of the past. A completely opposite language is the one used by the architect for the construction of the water tank. In this case the limit between architecture and sculpture becomes very thin.

[22] In the case of the elementary school, the large porch with portico is denounced in the elevation by raising a large prismatic volume materially treated with bricks arranged diagonally, interrupted only in one of the four corners that is emptied and closed with a curtainwall. This large parallelepiped rises above a portico, an architectural element that could be understood as the architect's signature, which will never give up one of their projects. The portico and the prism are in sharp contrast to the rest of the building which, except for the grey stone plinth, develops through pure, rigid and static volumes. The sharp cuts of the windows, the curb that closes the elevation in height, the flat roof and the plaster treatment of the façade give back the prefabricated flavour that is well associated with modern international rational architecture. This characteristic makes us understand how Frezzotti was not completely extraneous to the international debate of modern architecture. And they almost certainly looked at their foreign colleagues, much more than they looked at. The work of Frezzotti in Sabaudia is its clear demonstration.

[23] For the O.N.B. Building, the architect, though articulating the composition of the geometries in the plan and playing skilfully with the volumetric development, will insert some elements much more linked to tradition. The main entrance volume is nothing but a monumental closed portico. The strong and static lines, given by the structural element brought to the façade, are contrasted with the rounded corners of the linear body where the service entrance and the library are housed. Finally, the tower which has an exclusively aesthetic value is also inserted in this case. The tower that rises above the caretaker's room is not habitable but constitutes a volumetric element capable of breaking the horizontality of the entire building, and also assumes the symbolic role representative of the new efficiency and power of the fascist regime. The symbolic and purely aesthetic character of the tower is emphasized by the presence of a monumental arch that develops throughout its height. The arch, also treated physically in a different way from the tower, covered with bricks, is the architect's return to a language more linked to tradition, and to the modern current of eclectic monumentalism.

The water tank's is nothing more than a gear symbol of the exaltation of modern mechanics that has made possible the whole work of reclamation. In its vertical development the building reserve some interesting elements describing a strong propensity for what will be defined later eclectic monumentalism[24].

Figure 3 O. Frezzotti Sabaudia, 1934. The primary school. Contemporary photo by the author

Figure 4 O. Frezzotti Sabaudia, 1934. The O.N.B. Building. Contemporary photo by the author

[24] The water tank grows in height by 25 meters, and clearly resumes the figure of the fascist beam. Also, in this case the structural element is brought outwards, leaving the curved walls free to hold decorative elements. The latter are none other than the grooves signalling the façade vertical development of the silos and that they stop where the water tank begins.
The clear reference to the figure of the fascist beam establishes not only a turning point in the architect's formal style but also marks, once again, a state of advancement of theories on fascist architecture within the national debate. It is in these years that the need for architecture is not only functional and modern, but symbolic and able to express the new power.

Pontinia

Inaugurated on 19 December 1934[25], Pontinia[26] was directly designed by the O.N.C offices. At the base of the choice there was the strong controversy that was raised on the definition of these cities. In fact, following the policy of dis-urbanism, they should not be identified as cities but rather as agro-city.[27] To avoid the media clash, which could have highlighted the problems related to the implementation of the full reclamation project, the same Mussolini decided to avoid the instrument of public competition[28].

Oriolo Frezzotti once again took part in the project of a Fascist New Town collaborating with Ing. A. Pappalardo for the city of Pontinia in particular taking care of the water tank and the church. Once again, eclecticism will characterize the architect's production, thus returning to a more traditional style, even if embracing the current style of the monumental Littorio's architecture[29].

[25] The day after the administrative transformation of Littoria that from the Rural Commune becomes a Province.il giorno dopo la trasformazione amministrativa di Littoria che da Comune Rurale passa ad essere una Provincia.

[26] See the article "Ruralità in Pontinia" published in "La Tribuna" December 20, 1934: *"Pontinia will be the town that will have no bellury, on the occasion of friezes, statue, columns, is not a game sale, and night spots. The story is like that, it has never been like that, it has never been so beautiful, it has never been so easy, perfumes and exotic lipsticks: the country has arisen on the assumption that no one would buy this piece of junk, the reaffirmed rurality of Pontinia, symbolic and external to all the Agro Redento, it represents the gray-green habit that must still dress without frenzy of urban dressings, because, as we said at the beginning, the battle continues and it is hard. "*

[27] Was Mussolini itself to clarify, with a telegram, the point about the difference between the City and the Agro City: *"All that rhetoric about Littoria simple rural commune and nothing at all east city in absolute contrast with the anti-urbanistic policy of the Regime. Stop. Even the ceremony of the laying of the first stone east a relief of other times. Stop. Not return to the subject."* ACS, Segr. Part. del Duce. Autografi del Duce, 7.X.D (29 june 1932)

[28] *"At the" modern "Sabaudia di Piccinato is therefore followed by the" rural Pontinia "designed by an anonymous designer (Ing. Pappalardo) with the advice of Frezzotti. His purpose expressed after the inauguration of Sabaudia was put into practice. Then, not satisfied by the architecture of Piccinato and colleagues, the same, mind you, of which he publicly praises the praises - he had decided to do without architects. Turning to Cencelli he would have said: "Enough of this rational and monotonous architecture. Once again, we design the projects with her and with the designers on our orders ". And at the ONC he gave orders not to ban any competition. "* (Nicoloso, pp. 125-126)

[29] After Sabaudia's project, Mussolini, realizing how much the rationalist architecture was not representative of Italian values and much more predisposed to the creation of a single international style that is the same for everyone, he decided to drastically change course and start a decisional process that gave life to Italian neoclassicism. Once again, the architecture of the newly founded cities provides the concrete document of the evolution of the architectural research of the '30s in Italy.

The case of Pontinia is also particularly interesting for its media response. Suffice to say that Pagano, while not paying too much attention to the project of the new towns, took care of Pontinia for a critique of national architecture (Pagano, 1935).

So, the *super-gothic organ pipes that would decorate the exterior of the new church of Pontinia, a rural town for antonomasia and not much in tune with such shenanigans.* (Pagano, 1935) are nothing more than the umpteenth representation of the political contradictions of the regime, which reflect in the variation of style of architecture produced in the Thirties. (Fig. 5) But not only: architecture becomes metaphysics. Even in Pontinia the architectural elements belonging to a repertoire of the past are no longer important, but they are the symbolic instruments of the Regime.[30] The subtle difference between architecture and sculpture is increasingly imperceptible, but it is not surprising knowing that it is precisely in this period that we can witness to a total separation between the shape of the building and its function.[31]

Figure 5. O. Frezzotti Pontinia, 1934-35. The Prospective axes. At the end of the main street we can see the church. Contemporary photo by the author

[30] In Sabaudia the Fascist beam for the tank and, in Pontinia, the organ pipes for the façade design of the church.
[31] One of the main characteristics of Fascist architecture will be the impossibility of understanding, through direct observation of the building, its intended use. Each building is a monument and every monument is a building. Symbolism invades architectural production in all its forms: starting from the plan (the Littoria's station is in turn the representation of a fascist beam) up to the façade solutions, where in some cases it is impossible to understand where architecture ends and where the decorative sculptural element begins.

The same kind of process is described by Le Corbusier in Verso an architecture in 1921. In his text he explains how architectures, formally inspired by new machines, are the best tool for the exaltation of technical progress and modernity. Producing a building that looks directly like an airplane or a steamer is no different from producing an architecture formally inspired by the lictorian beam or an organ of a church. So are the references that is changed and not the method. This concept is put into practice by Frezzotti, who will use the symbolic elements of the Regime as formal references for his buildings.

The importance of these urban and architectural artefacts as real documents of the evolution of the history of modern architecture is also, in the case of Pontinia, perfectly understandable for the impact they had in the scientific debate. It is not a coincidence that the rationalist Sabaudia, modern and beautiful is praised, while the rural Pontinia, *demonstration of how we should not make a regulatory plan and how we should not build (*Pagano, 1935*),* is severely criticized. Sabaudia and Pontinia, therefore represent directly and physically the debate between rational architecture and traditional architecture that will characterize the definition of a modern Italian architecture, which is the fascist architecture, and which will find its definition only in eclectic monumentalism. Eclectic monumentalism that will characterize, not by chance, the projects for the 1935 Littoria's buildings.

Conclusions

What is clearly visible then from the examples shown here is like Littoria, Sabaudia and Pontinia, are the physical laboratories where the research of the canons of modern Italian architecture is carried out. To better understand the process of definition of a national modern style we can't forget that the strong political influence of the Regime did not allow the development of a sufficiently clear and defined architectural current. There will be very few architectures that will directly refer to a more international style. But it must always be remembered that even those architects who proposed a more "contemporary" style aimed at defining the fascist architecture, rather than defining an Italian

rational modern architecture. Moreover, the difficulty of foreign influences also derives from the net closure of politics in favour of a nationalist imprint.

Despite the heated debate and the contrasting achievements of the first years of the 20th century in Italy - Before the architectural realizations assumed a common figuration under the guidance of Piacentini - it is possible to clearly read the evolution of modern Italian architecture in the projects of the city of foundation.
Vernacular elements reworked and proposed first in an eclectic and subsequently in a monumental key are all collected in the great book written by Littoria, Sabaudia and Pontinia. The architecture that characterize these buildings, despite being the symbol of a political ideology, assume their value not as representative of it, but as physical documents that bear witness to the historical evolution of Italian architecture.

The architecture of Frezzotti is therefore the testimony of how modern architecture has evolved within a heated debate between modernity and tradition; and it is the result of the strong political influence applied by Fascism.

What we wanted to determine with this text is the importance that the architectures of the city of foundation have and assume over time. They would therefore require a new critical re-reading, not influenced by current or past political conditions. Only through an objective reading of its physical elements and their variations, in fact, will it be possible to identify within these artefacts the role of architecture in the years of Fascism.

Finally, these architectural products assume even more value today because they represent, in their current conformation, the approach to the "modern" historical heritage influenced by the current political perception of the story.

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THE MODERN APPROPRIATION OF URBAN SPACE THROUGH MEDITERRANEAN MEDINAS

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Abstract

Complex dialectic between Modern Movement and the Mediterranean finds in Moroccan experiences in the fifties an important shift, addressing relations between city and human perception. Both technical and cultural needs moved architects of Service de l'Urbanisme, led by Michel Ecochard since 1946, to call into question the paradigm of vertical city used to be proposed in Europe. Typical issues of Modern research on collective housing - standardization, economy, density – are thus influenced by traditional medinas, having been conceptually rethought, turning over Le Corbusier's vertical aggregations on the horizontal surface of landscape.
New horizontal density, experimented for the first time in Morocco in the early fifties, was driven by several factors: regional influence of the city as well as constructive and practical issues, that let Modern architecture rediscover the value of urban space. Ecochard design investigates the structure of the voids of the traditional city, interprets the different typologies, their hierarchical relationships and scale modulation along with their socio-cultural meanings.
Through Moroccan medinas, Modern Movement in post-war period discover again the sense of urban space and of the deep-rooted structure of the city. Issues that would have considerable success in the subsequent realizations in Morocco as well as in CIAM debate and in European experimentations, starting from Adalberto Libera up to Alvaro Siza.
City as urban fabric reconstructs human scale, finding a new social centrality for public space. Into concatenation of voids, light and shadow, spaces properly calibrated for collective life testifies the semantic richness of spontaneous settlements and corroborates the Mediterranean vocation of Modern architecture.

Keywords: Mediterranean city, colonial modern, Michel Ecochard, Habitat pour le plus grand nombre, Morocco

Background. Mediterranean urban space and Modern architecture.

The regionalist influence of Mediterranean city and of North African medinas represents a corroborating element of whole Modern architecture Mediterranean

vocation. As observable in medinas and *casbah*[1], most of Mediterranean urban characters persist in coastal settlements along North Africa and southern Europe shores. The urban space generated over centuries by adaptations to land and climate, manifest itself with common characters, even beyond the considerable cultural, political and religious differences.

This spatiality takes form of an immanent character, manifesting himself in the deep connection between architecture, landscape and city, and in the recurrence of a series of spatial figures. Even in the differences among urban fabrics genesis, the recurring aspect is the systematic continuity of open space within architecture and landscape: this is defined by built elements mediating different open space statutes and structuring those in a succession of thresholds: landscape space, urban space and open domestic space.

The indistinguishability between the sculpted rock, the stone base and Mnesicle's architecture in the Athens propylaea is the metonymy of such typical condition of building: necessarily linked to the landscape, wherein spatial narration is structured. The adherence to orography and to climate has guided the self-organized process driving the juxtaposition of architectural elements. These are arranged on the randomness of nature in order to conform an internal habitat, according to physical and cultural needs.

The modulation of the *continuum* of the open space becomes a phenomenological character, detached from the abstract order of the grid, but adherent to the organic nature of territory and of men (Tzompanakis, 2012). This modulation of the void is controlled by architecture: at once walls, curtains, volumes, patios and orographic terracing shapes open spaces at human scale. Fabrics and voids are punctuated by events, that provide direction, rhythm and hierarchy to space. Mediterranean phenomenology is thus a narrative space, to be read through perceptive sequences guided by architecture.

[1] The two terms identify different portions of cities in North African context. In urban areas, the term *Casbah* refers to a fortified citadel, including military buildings and a small part of residential fabric; the *medina* is the commercial city, where population lives and most of public activities *take* place: the *souk*, the Koranic schools, the mosques. In rural areas, where a real urban fabric is lacking, the actual fortification is identified with *Qsar*, while *Casbah* describes the inner urban micro-cosmos enclosed within the walls.

The juxtaposition of simple volumes creates a dense ensemble, crossed by collective life spaces corresponding to typical figures: the *piazza* and the *souk*[2], the *passage sous saba* and the *sottoportego*[3], the alley and the domestic patio. Elements consistency and identity between city, architecture and ground level produce the bas-relief effect: city and urban space are as a unique sculpted matter, a set of elements so linked to be perceptible as a whole.

Tension between the whole and its parts in Mediterranean built landscapes marks Modern architecture from its early days. The stroke of C.-E. Jeanneret, who draws the profile of the acropolis by including buildings such as orographic incrustations (Roma, 2016) and, only afterwards, discerns the parts, is a metaphor of the symbiotic relationship between architecture and landscape. Feature of architectural adherence to orography and open space, manifesting itself likewise in the clustered villages of Cyclades and southern Italy, as well as in the Casbahs of the southern coast, from Tunis to Algiers and Tangier.

Landscapes bearing a structural and spatial character is findable in Le Corbusier's first production, as in the aggregative Dom-Ino system (1914). This configure an addition system becoming a whole, whose parts are hard to be discerned, relating architectural voids to open space. Similarly, in the atopic *Cité Jardin* (1925) and, even more, in the aggregative solution proposed for the *Cité Universitaire* in Paris (1925), a *'caravanserai university campus'* (Boesiger and Stonorov, 1967, p. 73): here, the aggregation of base cells and inner voids constitute a porous whole.

Mediterranean themes are treated more at architectural scale rather than at urban one. The extroflexion of structural and distributive elements as well as terraces and patios look for a close dialogue between the building and the open space even in Pessac realisation (1924).

Nonetheless, more difficultly these characters establish a systemic value at urban scale; failing the typical density of traditional city and the articulation of an open space system, fabrics lack the coherent narrative structure between the

[2] Arab term for the main commercial street and squares within ancient urban fabrics
[3] The French term, used in North Africa, and the Venetian one refer to the galleries providing public space continuity through and under buildings

architectures. Exemplary once again Pessac, where the figurative characterization of architectures follows Mediterranean dynamics between architecture and open space, while the dialectic between building and open space is diluted in the scale of the settlement, dissolving the tension of the link between architectures.

An urban breath of concatenation can be similarly found where the city is condensed in the synthetic macro-sign. In the geometric structure that holds together the Immeuble-villa (1922), as well as in the landscape design of Plan Obus in Algiers (1930).

The urban matrix of such macrostructures seems indisputable, whereas the "inner" nature is a whole of parts, a complex and polyvalent multiplicity of architectural ingredients: curtains are walls and patios, roofs are floors and garden. The "exterior" however is transfigured. Closed in the walls of geometry, the city offers itself to landscape by opposition. There is no more intimacy between architecture and landscape, as intermediation disappears. Such space that is still landscape and not yet architecture, built, bordered, structured from architecture but still adhering to the ground, no longer exists.

The condensed lecorbusierian cities, while looking at great scale, lose the relation with the human-scaled urban space. Accordingly, Modern research of Athens charter period renounces to the architecture of urban fabrics. And without this, it loses the intermediate space between the wildness of landscape and the domestic patio: the civic space of squares, alleys and passages, measured with ground, characterized by microclimatic comfort and architectural quality, lights and shadows, dilatations and contractions, such as to host citizenship life.

Colonial Modern and Michel Ecochard innovation.

The experience of Modern architecture in Morocco is a key step the appropriation of Mediterranean urban spatiality. For several reasons, related to its genesis and its success, which I will explain assuming hypothetically the action of Michel

Ecochard as a revealing event, a link between the tendencies of early modernism and the successive experimentations on the Mediterranean urban form.

First, Michel Ecochard, French architect leading the *Service de l'Urbanisme* of French Protectorate in Morocco from 1946 to 1952, declares it openly. In the exhibition of their projects at IX CIAM in 1953, the Group of Modern Moroccan Architects (GAMMA) presents historical fabrics as inspiration sources for their projects.

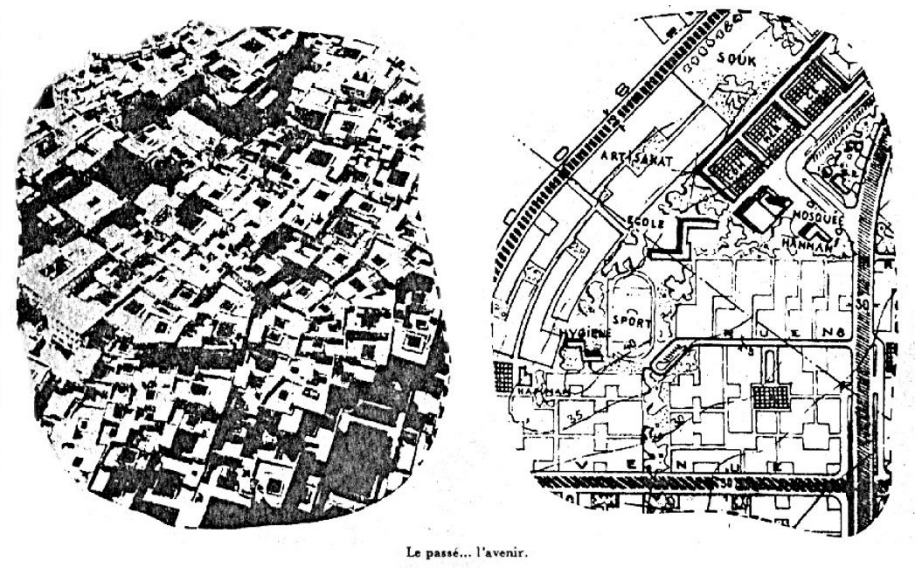

Figure 1. 'The past... the future' (Ecochard, 1950, p. 12). The model of the medina and the project for Cité Yacoub el Mansour, Rabat, 1948

A first interesting aspect of Moroccan Modern architecture therefore concerns the pursuit of an explicit link with the Mediterranean city. The *otherness* of the pre-modern context, progressively excluded from the Modern thought, that in antinomy had defined its own urban manifesto, is programmatically assumed to be a central element (Avermaete, Karakayali *et al.*, 2010). The series of projects undertaken since 1948 in Rabat, then in Casablanca and in other Moroccan cities investigate the typological and morphological characters of the fabric: dimensions and features of historic patio houses, their territorial organization structure and principles; moreover, urban space sense and its morphological and

semantic aspects: as a veritable tool of mediation between the collective sphere and the individual dimension, the open space of the medina follows a precise statute that's expression of the socio-cultural meaning of space sequences and thresholds.

The projects of *Cité horizontale* take such structural logic as their guiding path. The patio cells are installed on 8-meters-wide square grid, that infrastructures the territory and constitutes the metric element. However, cells juxtaposition is not in series but in clusters: vehicular roads define the perimeter of neighbourhood units, dense, pedestrian fabrics, structured around a centre with proximity services. Inside the fabrics, open space is hierarchized in a progression that follows the organizational structure of the medina. Crossing alleys are reduced in section towards residential sectors. These in turn expand into squares for proximity relations and life, on which open impasses leading to the domestic space of the patio. Hence, open space is structured in several orders: circulation and collective services, neighbourhood spaces, proximity areas and domestic patios. This progression matches, morphologically and organizationally, use and perception codes of traditional settlements, offering a frame measured on human scale and calibrated on local habits.

Figure 2. Michel Ecochard, Horizontal fabrics in Cité Yacoub el Mansour, Rabat, 1948 (source: Photothèque, Ecole Nationale d'Architecture, Rabat)

A further interesting aspect is that theory has been followed by realization. On the date of the IX CIAM, many of the horizontal fabrics of Ecochard were already in use. Ecochard rationalizes the medina, assumes its structural principles within a standardized, prefabricated, economic system. Without derogating from the Athens Charter methodology (Ecochard, 1955), he simply proposes a different spatial model for Modern city.

Several choices are dictated by pragmatism. Beginning from the pursuit of an extensive urban model, rooted to the ground, providing strong relations with open space and earth: this stems from the goal to facilitate urban settlement for a population mostly coming from rural areas and still keeping rural habits. In such pragmatic spirit, ready solutions are needed, able to respond quickly and economically to an exceptional demographic pressure. Here is the functionalist method of Ecochard's team, and the shift of their design innovation.

Parcel dimensions, 8 meters by 8, and rooms proportions arise from efficiency criteria: the maximum 3 meters width of indoor spaces allows to use same prefabricated reinforced concrete panels for walls and roofs. Likewise, cluster organisation – rather than series – allows to optimize land use, keeping higher density together with more free public space to allow neighbourhood relations.

Modern *logos* intertwines without prejudice spontaneous *metis*[4] (Avermaete, Karakayali *et al.*, 2010), drawing on the spontaneous city logics.

The result is an innovative morphology: modern in shape, in construction, in the orthogonal grid that infrastructures the *tabula rasa* of virgin Moroccan territories; Mediterranean and complex in space structure, which re-proposes the concatenation of urban spaces and clearly establishes their status. Externally dense and compact, Ecochard neighbourhood units allow themselves to be crossed by increasingly minute pathways, proposing squares expansions and alleys compression.

Volume is reduced to the minimum. A series of enclosures organize open space establishing the mediation between "outside" landscape space, the intermediate

[4] *Metis* in ancient Greece was the spontaneous knowledge, opposite to *logos*

urban space and the intimate patio space "inside". White walls just arranged on the ground provide the absolute identity between architecture and city, domestic and collective space.

The innovation of a Modern fabric had several echoes in cultural debates and local heritage, which constitute the third element of interest of the Moroccan experience (Cohen, 1992). As mentioned, the Ecochard methodology has been presented at IX CIAM at Aix en Provence in 1953, through the visual grid *"Habitat pour le plus grand nombre"* by the Group of Modern Moroccan Architects (GAMMA).

The discussion at IX CIAM triggers a cultural debate in Europe on nature of Modern city, and on urges for a best care of human-scale in urban design, in its metrical, relational and social meanings. Team Ten protagonists were some of the promoters, including the George Candilis and Shadrach Woods who had been part of Moroccan *Service de l'Urbanisme*, as well as other figures that gave breath to the horizontal density formative tendency during the second post-war European period.

On the short distance, in time and space, the pioneering experience of Ecochard has been reiterated in Morocco and in other colonial contexts, enriched in architectural typologies but constant to the research on urban fabric and morphology. Design solutions and themes that surely Ecochard had already seen, in Mediterranean and in modern architecture, whose experimentation in Morocco has the merit of systematizing in a programmatic and transmissible form.

Variations. From Casablanca to Évora

Subsequent experiences in North Africa

Ecochard framework, made of patio cells and territory grids, is a design tool easy to understand and to reapply. Similar models have been reiterated in colonial contexts – *inter alia* Cansado in Mauritania or Accra in Ghana –

providing introverted habitat in horizontal fabrics, whose affinity is easy to be found in Ecochard realizations (Vv. Aa., 1955: 60).

After Moroccan independence, the same compositional structure was the basis of numerous variations, made by local architects and by local population spontaneous adaptations. Variations on Ecochard's fabrics mainly concern buildings heights: practical reasons of land density and the research of a less monotony suggest higher tissues towards a better plain-void rhythm. This happens in spontaneous evolution, which distresses designed balance elevating the plots towards a new stability, still based on Ecochard frames persistence (Maricchiolo, 2015).

In a similar way, the design production guided by the *Service de l'Urbanisme* after Ecochard leaving from Morocco, moved toward higher fabrics.

An interesting case in Rabat is the construction of the *Cité Youssoufia*. Begun in 1961, it differs from the Ecochard *Cité horizontale* for a more complex conception of urban space, although it keeps similar the housing typology and urban grid. The program includes three different types of housing, which correspond to different open space morphologies within a unitary design. In the centre, there are some small collective buildings, towers or lines, marking a large collective space provided with a central market. Around it rises a multi-family houses fabric, set on the 8x8 meters grid, arranged in arrays folded up on their own to constitute neighbourhood micro-areas. External, it stands a less dense houses sector.

The inner space of *Youssoufia* comes from Ecochard low plots and higher public centres, whilst much structured. The connotation of central public space and of avenues is entrusted to higher buildings layout, shaping an articulated square. The minute space is marked by the grid, in which is infilled the rhythmic alternation of volumes and voids of two levels units. This creates a chiaroscuro and perspective variation that gives depth to the urban image, while the jagged skyline deals with the spontaneous character of Mediterranean architecture. A captivating skyline in pure Modern forms that, together with plan slippage, construct dynamic perspectives towards the central space.

Figure 3. Rabat, Cité Yousoufia. In foreground the urban fabric, beside the central square with collective housing and the market (source: Photothèque, Ecole Nationale d'Architecture, Rabat)

A further urban complexity, in accordance with the same theme of base grids and cells disposition, has been proposed in the unrealized proposal for Sidi Othman in Casablanca by John Hentsch and André Studer (1954). The project introduces cells superposition, towards a more sophisticated urban morphology. It prefigures a Modern *casbah*, in which the patio units overlap to create a three-dimensional fabric that amplifies the richness of open spaces experience.

The formative tendency of horizontal density

The dissemination of the results of Moroccan experimentations is curated by Michel Ecochard himself, who through publications and conferences put his work in European cultural debate. The experience of *Service de l'Urbanisme* in Morocco thus represents the first field test of Modern theories on urban design:

in early fifties, while Marseilles Le Corbusier housing unit is being built, it is in fact the first large scale application case for Athens Charter principles and for prefabrication and modern technology use in city planning and building. Among the visual grids presented at IX CIAM, *"habitat pour le plus grand nombre"* presents the only realized experience.

Urban morphology of horizontal density gives raise to Adalberto Libera interest. Present in 1951 in Rabat at the U.I.A Congress[5], which Ecochard is general rapporteur (Capannini, 2005), Libera had meanwhile been involved in the Tuscolano district construction in Rome. The postcard sent from Casablanca to Ina Casa president Foschini, '*voila l'Ina-Casbah'* (Mornati and Cerrini, 2004, p. 126), testifies the heteronomy of Tuscolano III genesis. A low, dense fabric characterized by the morphogenetic role of void, which already in the name, *Unità abitativa orizzonale*, alludes to the famous *Unité d'habitation* under construction in Marseilles, remarking its overturning on the ground surface. Libera fabric does not stand on an isotropic and undefined landscape, but it draws its plots and relations (Saggio, 2016): as in Mediterranean fabrics, architectural elements shape a system of open, enclosed and covered spaces.

Libera unit is, by scale, more a building than an urban fabric. An *unicum* best refined in architectural solutions, plastic and constructive details, that resumes the regulatory traces of Ecochard horizontal city. An empty centre punctuated by a tall building, is surrounded by an open space hierarchy, establishing a system of thresholds emphasized by shelters. Dwellings typologies remind the lecorbusierian *Cité Universitaire*, while, without the "collapse" of internal paths, the system keeps user's walkability and city effect.

The attention to the perceptive and social dimension of dwellings, to the notion of *habitat* that in the colonial experience goes beyond the definition of a *machine for living* (Eleb, 1999), shifts the focus towards the relationship between residence and open space. Ecochard interdisciplinary approach in Morocco, whose action is corroborated by sociologist André Adam studies, widens the field

[5] The second congress of the *Union Internationale des Architectes*, held in Rabat in 1951 on the theme: *Comment l'architecture répond à ses nouvelles tâches* (How Architecture is Dealing with its New Tasks)

of interest to the relational needs of inhabitants. It moves design towards the realization of a framework of life - the *habitat*, in fact - beyond the physical and psychological limit of the house, calling into question collective sphere. Although the design action of Ecochard was primary aimed to solve housing problem, the analyses carried out on traditional city and on common space organization focus on relational weaving of the city.

Architectural debate enters the idea that urban space is the result and the frame of social and cultural practices. Such thought has been emphasized by Allison and Peter Smithson, that enhance Moroccan works, underlining the impact that Moroccan CIAM panels would have had on future protagonists of Team Ten thought (Smithson, A. and Smithson, P., 1955).

What the Ecochard project finally unveils is the plastic and spatial wealth that this open space can assume, through the spatialization of ground design. This is no longer an isotropic tray but is structured in a system of thresholds, with different uses and meanings for the user.

This sensitivity formed around the events of the IX CIAM tends to shift the conception of the city towards internal focus, assuming user's point of view, who crosses and perceives spaces with their own characterization and meaning. Non-linear spaces, planimetrically related to complex hierarchies, offsets, section and scale variations, continually configured by architectural presence.

This trend becomes a critical methodology that meets further issues, including Lynch and Jacobs studies in the United States, which reinforce the conscience on the link between morphology and vitality of public space (Saggio, 2012). Among the players of this critical review, and the individual versions provided by Team Ten members, it seems significant to remember the active participation in Morocco of Georges Candilis and Shadrach Woods[6], whose legacy of North African experience reverberates, for example, in the projects for the Free University of Berlin (1963) and for the Centre of Frankfurt (1963).

[6] The two architects, having founded the ATBAT-Afrique group with Vladimir Bodiansky, Bernard Kennedy and Henri Piot, worked with Ecochard's *Service de l'Urbanisme* to vertical residential units design and realization in Casablanca, the *Immeuble Nid d'Abeille* and the *immeuble Sémiramis*. Furthermore, they edited a part of the visual grid *"Habitat pour le plus grand nombre"* presentata at IX CIAM.

Far from Mediterranean shores, research on fabrics evolves on more methodological and operational ways[7]. The figurative research moves away from the strong and evident reference to the language, the landscape structure and the concatenation of spatial figures typical of Mediterranean city, from the white alleys skimming secret gardens, narrow within the walls that cross the territory. As well as from lecorbusierian endemic reference, often marked by a conceptual allusion to the imaginary of piled up villages along Mediterranean coasts.

The continuity of Mediterranean imprinting

It may seem a paradox that outside the Pillars of Hercules references to Mediterranean image are stronger. Portugal is a Mediterranean country less than it is Morocco, but in the research of Alvaro Siza emerge those spatial and figurative values that are part of the Western and Mediterranean background, played within a functionalist system.

Quinta da Malagueira settlement in Evora (1977-1998) interprets the whole phenomenological Mediterranean spatiality with the compositional mechanism, rigorous and functionalist, which Ecochard had also used. Several arrays resting on natural orography, internally compact and juxtaposed to each other, include a series of base cells that, as in Le Corbusier, and in Ecochard too, measures the system. The land design ensures rule and consistency, while the typological variety, due to the position of the patio and to the heights, attribute a random diversity that ignites the morphology of the space.

Along the narrow pedestrian streets stand variations on patio house, which keep boundary wall height as a fundamental tool for configuring open space. The high patios walls ensure intimacy as well as they avoid the loss of the road morphology. Curtains hold the masses together, defining both domestic and public open space. Aqueducts remark fabrics unity, signalling the systemic intention of the project, and putting the accent on the open space sense and qualification.

[7] E. g.: experimentations on mat-buildings and low-rise-high-density urban fabrics in the Uniited States and Europe. See: Saggio, A. (2012), pp. 223-235.

Siza is the last voice of the chorus of the Modern. He embodies its principles of urban construction, interpreting functionalism as an operating tool in both project construction and aesthetical or poetical expression. In the will and in the need to recognize the *pure volumes under the light of the sun*, and to preserve the purity of architecture, whose decoration lies in the modulation of light and shadows, as far as Modern aesthetic is made of space, proportions and poor materials.

Figure 4. Left: Cité Youssoufia in Rabat (source: photothèque, Ecole Nationale d'Architecture, Rabat). Right: A. Siza, Quinta da Malaqueira, Evora (source: author). Probably there are no direct relations between the two projects, however visual link testifies how similar methods and tools produce similar results

Conclusion

The overview of some Modern interpretations of the Mediterranean city, with particular attention to southern experiences, track down the emergence of related urban and spatial themes, linking similar phenomena. Among the experimentations on horizontal density, it seems not negligible the contribution made by the colonial experience, particularly by the first experience in Morocco. This is corroborated by the links between the protagonists of the *Service de l'Urbanisme* and the European panorama during the fifties, including the debate

around the IX CIAM, which initiates the critical revision of some theoretical models thanks to architects who practiced Moroccan field. Spatial suggestions of Mediterranean medinas reverberate thus beyond the borders of colonial Modern, permeating the architectural dialectic of the Mediterranean through its northern and southern shores.

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LUIS BARRAGÁN AND THE INVENTION OF MEXICAN REGIONALISM

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Abstract

The work of Luis Barragán (1902-1988) embodies Mexican identity, and the architect is considered one of the most important figures of the Critical Regionalism movement in Latin America. Nevertheless, a comprehensive analysis of his own private library–kept at the Barragan Foundation, Switzerland and Fundación de Arquitectura Tapatía Luis Barragán, Mexico–tells a different story. In fact, the contemporary critical reception of his work has a far more complex genesis, which might be summarised as follows:
1. Barragán, nemo propheta in patria. For many years, Barragán's work was better known abroad than in his own country. The national recognition came in 1976, with the Premio Nacional de Ciencias y Artes, after an exhibition at the MoMA in New York. At that time, Barragán was a 74-year old architect that had realized some of his most famous projects, such as the Casa Barragán, Tlalpan Chapel, Cuadra San Cristóbal, and Casa Gilardi.
2. Barragán, forger of an independent path. The urban project for Jardines del Pedregal was the turning point of Barragán's career, and from the mid-1940s the architect distanced himself from the research path of his colleagues. His detachment from the academic, political, and theoretical infrastructure allowed him to develop an autonomous language.
3. Barragán, a "visual" architect. Barragan defined his work as "autobiographical" and inspired by the colonial villages of his childhood. This is partially true; alongside Mexican architecture, the architect was deeply fond of the timeless aura of vernacular architecture in general. He was thus an enthusiastic reader of Bernard Rudofsky, as well as an omnivorous buyer of books from a wide spectrum of artists like Albres, De Chirico, Matisse, and Delvaux. His own library was a constant source of visual references for the projects.
Ultimately, what is today considered the maximum expression of Mexican architecture is in fact the invention of a solitary outsider.

Keywords: Luis Barragán, Mexican architecture, critical reception, Critical Regionalism, Mexican Regionalism.

Luis Barragán (1902-1988) is known today as the most influential Mexican architect of the twentieth century. He is also accredited as one of the greatest exponents of Critical Regionalism in Latin America. This has not always been the case: the comprehensive analysis of the archives – housed at the Barragan Foundation, Switzerland – tells a different story. In fact, the contemporary critical reception of his work has far more complex origins. The article is divided into three sections. The first focuses on the development of his critical success, the second Barragán's biography and the last looks at his personal library - kept at the Fundación de Arquitectura Tapatía Luis Barragán, Mexico.

1.Barragán nemo propheta in patria: no prophet is honoured in his country

For years his work was appreciated abroad and it was only later that his homeland recognized its importance. It therefore comes as no surprise that the first architectural magazine that ever published his buildings was the American *The Architectural Record*, in 1931. The display copies that were collected by Barragán throughout his career are now conserved in the Barragan Foundation archive. The collection goes back to the late nineteen twenty and includes almost 250 publications that were produced between 1927 and 1985, the year of the Rufino Tamayo's retrospective.[1] This collection helps illustrate the development of the Mexican designer's critical reception. The table below offers a systematic overview of the above-mentioned journals and magazines, indicating both origin and type (fig.1).

[1] In 1983 Barragán withdraws from the architectural firm Barragán + Ferrera Asociados that was founded in 1979. Architect Raúl Ferrera was the only socio Barragán ever had. Ferrera took over the office and was one of the curator of the Rufino Tamayo's retrospective. The 1985 exibition's layout showed the passage between Barragán and Raúl Ferrera leadirship.

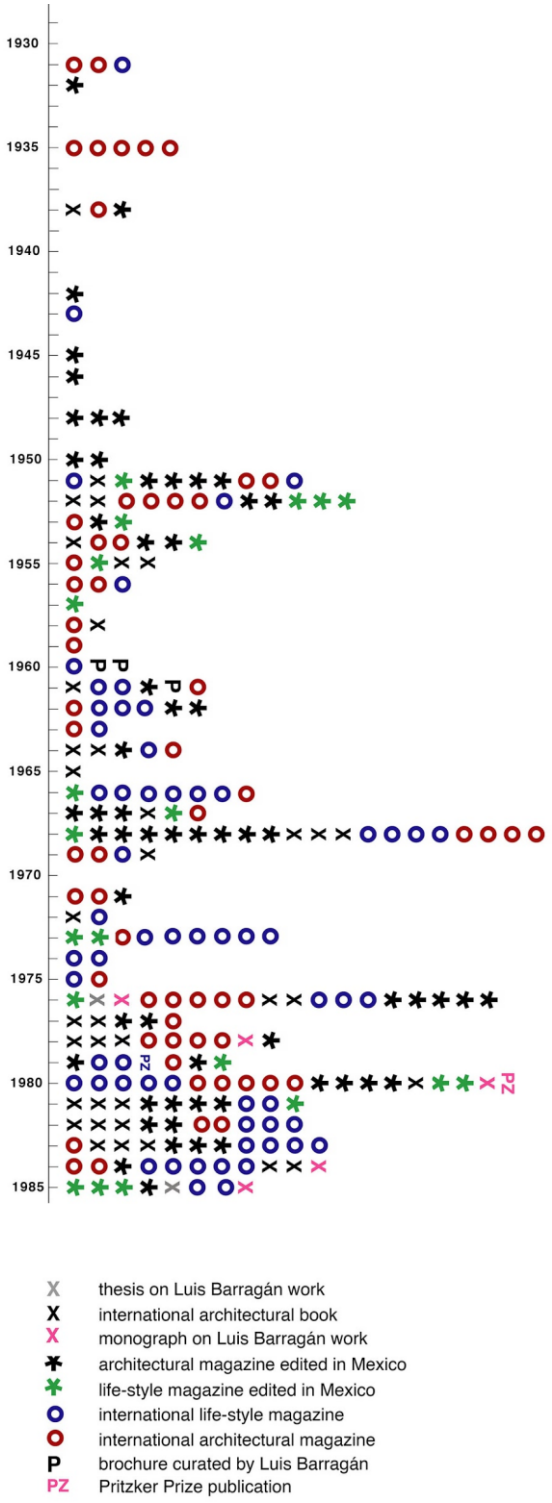

Figure 1. The Infographics represents the dispaly copies collected by Luis Barragán between 1927 to 1985 and today kepted at Barragan Foundation archive, Switzerland. The table was produced by the author.

The table allows us to make the following observations.

Firstly, the unequal relationship between the Mexican publications and those published abroad.2 Secondly, large amounts of the lifestyle magazines compared to those specialising in architecture.[3] Thirdly, it shows which projects were published the most frequently. Fourthly and lastly, the peaks in the graph show a direct proportional relationship between the number of publications and internationally renowned events. Several examples will make this clearer.

1952, Barragán completed the residential urbanisation of *Jardines del Pedregal de San Ángel*. In the same year, just a few kilometres away, Ciudad Universitaria had recently hosted the VIII *Congreso Panamericano de Arquitectos*.[4] Professionals and experts from throughout the world met in Mexico City. Both *Jardines del Pedregal de San Ángel* and Barragàn's private house in *Calle. Gen. Francisco Ramírez 14* (1947–1948) began to circulate in international journals.

1967 – 1968, the Mexican capital hosted the Games of the XIX Olympiad. The international press followed the event with great interest, with extensive reportages. Designed in collaboration with the artist Mathias Goeritz, the *Torres de Ciudad Satélite* (1957) became one of the symbols of Mexico '68. Their iconic silhouette appeared in fashion and lifestyle magazines and in brochures published by the organising committee chaired by Pedro Ramìrez Vázquez, and of which Goeritz was a member.

1974, Barragán is nominated honorary fellow of the American Institute of Architects / AIA. Two years later, on 4th June 1976 the MoMA inaugurated an exhibition dedicated to Barragán work. This was the only time ever, that the New York institution dedicated a monographic exhibition to just one Mexican architect. The catalogue was edited by the young Emilio Ambasz, who adopted a

[2] In fact, the international audience interpreted the work of Barragán's as ""*Mexican" and embrace it as a consumer product, but then denying it nationalist content" (O'Rourke p.327).*

[3] As a matter of fact, Barragán well knew the self-serving nature of photography which on the one hand popularized his work, on other hand increased his myth.

[4] In 1952 Barragán withdrew from *Jardines del Pedregal de San Ángel* project and took a sabbatical. He traveled to Stockholm with Justino Fernàndez in order to attend the International Congress of Landscape Architecture, 10-13 July (Mela, 2014, p. 104). In the following months, he traveled all through Europe up to Morocco. He visited: Spain, Italy, Portugal, France, Norway, England, Holland, Belgium, Greece, and Austria. (Pauly, 2002, p. 49)

critical-interpretative approach that is still commonly used. In November the same year, Barragán was awarded the *Premio Nacional de Ciencias y Artes* in Mexico.

In 1980 Luis Barragán was the second designer ever to be awarded the Pritzker Prize. Although the news did not receive much attention and the Mexican press overlooked it, it was seen by the diplomat and future Nobel winner for Literature, Octavio Paz, who criticised harshly Mexico's indifference in the magazine Vuelta, which he had founded.

In 1985 the Rufino Tamayo museum dedicated a retrospective exhibition to him. This was the first and last time that Barragán's work was displayed in Mexico City before his death.

The analysis of these publications shows that the renown Barragán achieved in his own country came after he had been recognised abroad, in the United States in particular. In order to understand this undisputable fact, his unique figure must be contextualised within the panorama of Mexican architecture.

2. Barragán, forger of an independent path

He was born in 1902 in the province of Jalisco to a conservative family of landowners. He spent his childhood on the family ranch near the colonial pueblo of Mazamitla. In 1923, after graduating in Civil Engineering in Guadalajara he went on to study architecture but the unexpected closure of the faculty left him without a degree. His provincial education was expanded significantly by two educational trips to Europe, the first from 1924 to 1925, and the second from 1931 to 1932.[5] Between the two trips he opened his own professional firm in Guadalajara. In fact, from the very beginning of his career he pursued an economic and linguistic autonomy that was only possible working free-lance.

[5] In both cases he went to New York, and then on to Europe, where he spent a considerable amount of time in Paris. During the stay in New York that preceded his second trip he met José Clemente Orozco, Frederick Kiesler e Alfred Lawrence Kocher, director of *The Architectural Record*. On the same trip he met the landscape architect and illustrator Ferdinand Bach and Le Corbuiser. It was the latter that influenced Barragán's entire production.

Nevertheless, he did not turn down the occasional collaboration, for example with his engineer brother Juan, with whom he designed *Parque de la Revolución* (1934-1935). After having designed several Mediterranean-style houses that were inspired by the work of Ferdinand Bach, he moved to Mexico City. Between 1936 and 1943 he completed approximately 20 functionalist houses and apartment blocks. The building boom in the capital helped spread the modern movement in Mexico, so much so that his architecture in that period is very similar to that of colleagues of his such as Augusto Alvarez, Juan Sordo Madaleno, Mario Pani, Juan O'Gorman, José Villagrán García, Juan Legarreta. Nevertheless, the young engineer was frustrated by the compromises he had to make in works he was commissioned with and for a while he retired from the profession and devoted himself to landscape design instead. In just a few years he had built his own house and garden in Calle Ramirez 20. At the same time he created the three gardens along Avenida San Jeronimo near the rocky wilderness area called El Pedregal. 1945 was a turning point. With a business partner, he purchased 400 hectares in the desert and transformed it into the residential subdivision *Jardines del Pedregal de San Ángel* (1945-1952). This was the point of no return. The harsh nature of the volcanic terrain led him to experiment with a new language that was able to embody the natural surroundings.

While he was busy designing and constructing gardens, squares and display houses, most of his colleagues were working on the monumental campus of Ciudad Universitaria, which was characterised by the national style called *Integración Plástica*. This was the first in a long series of public commissions and competitions in which Barragán did not take part. Whilst architects were designing vast housing complexes and outlining urban plans, Mario Pani in particular, Luis Barragán was working as a designer and entrepreneur, building private homes and residential subdivisions. His shrewd choice of clients combined with financial independence allowed him to experiment and consolidate the architectural language that had become his trademark at the beginning of the nineteen fifties.

Although he cultivated friendships with Mexican and foreign architects, he confided in Ambasz that he felt he was a stranger. *"It is a lonely road but, as he confesses, it is only among architects that he feels himself to be the stranger. Not for any anti-intellectual bias, but because he believes their education has estranged them from their own emotional and intuitive capacities"* (Ambasz, 1976: p.107-108). Barragán was endowed with both a keen aesthetic sensitivity and a pragmatic, rational mind. His multiple identities as a designer and entrepreneur made him a professional and, as such, he never saw himself as an architectural expert. In fact, he never became a professor. Despite being a member of the editorial board of magazies *Espacios* and *Arquitectura México*, he shirked the activities of assayer or writer and consequently, it was only on very rare occasions that he participated in conferences. Barragán did not forge his own theoretical infrastructure and it is this lacuna that makes his production indecipherable, so that still today it has eluded any form of classification. Rudimental analytical tools are to be gleaned from the rare interviews he gave, his acceptance speech for the Pritzker Prize and last but not least the MoMA catalogue.

3. Barragán, a "visual" architect

Despite his anti-theoretical approach, Barragán was a very learned figure and his closest friends included Mexican intellectuals such as Edmundo O'Gorman, Miguel Covarrubias and Justino Fernàndez. His vast personal library, today housed in the FATLB, is testimony to his extensive culture and offers a stratified portrait of its owner from when he was young until adulthood. The books he collected throughout his life offer a multifaceted picture of his interests. The heterogeneous nature of the collection reflects the image of a self-taught man, whose omnivorous curiosity was satisfied with fiction, catalogues, art books, and anthropological and architectural texts. With over two thousand items, the vastness of his library has been analysed in depth over the last few years.[6] Studies classified the books into thematic groups. Whilst extremely useful, this

[6] Two books have thoroughly investigated Barragá's library and personal notes. They are: *Voz de tinta dormida* and *En busca de Luis Barragán* by Alfonso Alafaro and María Emilia Orendáin respectively.

classification does not allow one to understand the library's stratigraphy, in other words, how it developed over the years. An analysis of this kind would make it possible to understand which books influenced Barragán at a specific moment in time.

I personally used this method to contextualise the masterplan of the city Lomas Verdes (1964-1967), which was the subject of my PhD dissertation. The library proved to be a precious resource in helping establish the repertoire of critical and visual references that shaped the project. Designed in collaboration with the architect Juan Sordo Madaleno, Lomas Verdes is the masterplan for a New Town with 100,000 inhabitants that was meant to be constructed on the hills near Mexico City. The project was partially realized. A multitude of visual references converge in the Lomas Verdes project, some of which can still be traced today in notes and bookmarks in Barragán's library. Following are some examples.

The towers. Like a mediaeval Italian city, the profile of Lomas Verdes was characterised by towers that were twenty floors high, with a cruciform plan. Their volume evokes the apartment towers in Vällingby, a Swedish New Town that Barragán and Sordo visited on a study trip in 1964.[7] In 1958 the journal *Urbanistica* included Vällingby in the article called *Le città satelliti di Stoccolma*, some of the pages of which are conserved today in FATLB in the form of travel report.

The city centre: Ziggurat. Lomas Verdes had a civic centre or heart. The latter was characterised by buildings of monumental dimensions included the building nicknamed Ziggurat. This was an architectural complex that, comprising an ascending sequence of squares, led to the church at the top. According to the archive documents in the BF, the name Ziggurat is an explicit reference to the towers in ancient Iranian civilisations. The FATLB library houses the book "Sumer", and one of the numerous bookmarks identifies the unmistakeable visual reference as the Chogha Zanbil complex (Parrot, 1960, p.87). The panel

[7] In year 1964 Barragán and Sordo travelled to Europe in order to visit the most recent urban residential developments and collect references for the master plan they were commissioned to do for Lomas Verdes. The tour included visits to five countries: Italy, France, England, Sweden, and Denmark. They visited the new towns of Vällingby, Farsta, and the newly built neighborhoods of Brøndbyparken and Nygårdsparken, Copenaghen.

depicting the general overview of Ziggurat is made with the collage technique. The lapis lazuli blue of the sky is contrasted by the red and carmine colour of the building. Both the chromatic combination and the geometrical composition of the panel evoke paintings by the artist Josef Albers, in particular one of the works dating 1967, entitled *Variation of the theme*, inspired by Mexican ruins. The painting can be found in the book *Josef Albers: son oeuvre et sa contribution à la figuration visuelle au XXe siècle* (Gomringen, 1972, p.118), which is now conserved in the FATLB.

The city centre: Edificio Símbolo. Whilst Albers' influence can be seen in Ziggurat, in Edificio Símbolo (1965-1967) -literally Symbolic Building- and its relative square one can infer echoes of Giorgio de Chirico's metaphysical painting. The office complex presents itself as two blade-like buildings juxtaposed with one another at a right angle. Their orange colour blends with the square grid of the paving. The square is surrounded by two symmetrical arcades, a wall and a colonnade. An expanse of water reflects the sky in the centre. As in the projects prior to *Plaza del Zocàlo* (1955) and *Plaza de Cigarro* (1956), once again Barragán was inspired by de Chirico's Ferrarese period. Firstly, he dilates the relationship between solids and voids so that the latter dominate. Secondly, he introduces both archetypal architecture and uses saturated colours. Doing so he achieves his objective: the architecture is suspended in both time and space.

The Lomas Verdes project was influenced decisively by both art and vernacular architecture. The heart of the city is surrounded by residential suburban districts that are divided into neighbourhoods. The architects designed a variety of residential typologies including terraced houses called *"Cuenca"*. This name indicated the terraced house that, sheltered by the ravines, protrudes from the rocky wall like the same-named houses in the Spanish city.
One of Barragán's few sketches seems to combine two distinct references: the city of Cuenca with the kasbahs of Atlante that he visited on his tour in 1952-1953. The numerous books he collected before and during the trip, the most important of which was "*Cimes et Vallées du Grand Atlas*", were an addition to what was already an extensive library devoted to colonial and traditional

Mexican, mediaeval Italian, Franciscan, Mediterranean, Greek and Andalusian architecture[8].

Generally speaking, the large quantity of books on anonymous constructions is firstly documentation of Barragán's critical orientation as regards modern architecture. Secondly, it asserts the coherence of research directed at creating architecture that, whilst not regional as such, was able to incorporate the identity of the place. The line of study that Barragán followed with such steadfastness is parallel to that of Bernard Rudofsky who inaugurated the exhibition *Architecture without Architects* at the MoMA in November 1964, thus legitimising the role of minor, anonymous architecture in the global debate. We do not know if Barragán ever visited the exhibition but we do know he had the catalogue as well as *Streets for People*, and *The Prodigious Builders* books written by the same author[9].

The variety of references that converge in the Lomas Verdes project are not only testimony to Barragán's ability to draw on, without prejudice, heterogeneous figurative and plastic repertories and to metabolise and combine them into a new form that is also ancient. The final product has two registers. Being autobiographical in nature, the first is personal whilst the second is universal as it expresses a language that goes beyond geographical, cultural and temporal limits.

For better of for worse, factors such as the elementary nature of his architecture and his unmistakable chromatic timber, the large blank stucco walls, the use of locals material all helped turn Barragán's work in the of the quintessencial of the "Mexican aesthetics". Ultimately, what is today considered the maximum expression of Mexican modern architecture is in fact the invention of a solitary outsider "*who was detached from the ideological sides and the superstition of committed art*" (Paz, 1980, p.48).

[8] For in-depth information I suggest the essay by Fernando Curiel Gámez: *Arquitecturas sin arquitectos: la mirada de Luis Barragán por las arquitecturas del Norte de África y Medio Oriente*.
[9] Based on Adriana Williams' memory, in the early nineteen sixties Barragán was invited to give a lecture at Yale University. He acceped on one condition: being invited with Bernard Rudowsky in order to discuss about the the book *Architecture without Architects*. The conference never took place. (Williams, 2002)

His contemporaries were not considering him the the greatest representative of the Mexican identity, at a round table hosted by the journal *Arquitectura México* in 1976 the recognised him as an international author as he had been profoundly influenced by masters of the twentieth century. (Arquitectura México, 1976, p. 9-11). In this respect, O'Rourke (2016, p.284) wrote:

> in many ways *Barragán is perfect for an international canon of modern architecture:* like Le Corbusier, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Frank Lloyd Wright, many of his important works were houses or religious buildings. His roof terraces, attention to materials, clear geometries, avoidance of ornaments, and asymmetrical facades made his architecture easy place in a narrative that even today often treats "moder architecture" and "international Style" as synonyms.

Whether one agrees with this definition or not, thirty years after his death it is still evident that he continues to elude any kind of classification. That he belongs to the current of critical regionalism is justified by the works created from 1947 to 1976 such as *Barragán House* (1947-1948), *Torres de Ciudad Satélite* (1957) *Tlalpan Chapel* (1954-1960), *Las Arboledas* (1957-1962), *Cuadra San Cristóbal* (1966-1968), and *Gilardi House* (1975-1976).

However, historical criticism tends to forget the works created after 1976. Gilardi house does not mark an end of his working life. This project is the turning point of a last season of Barragan's career. In fact, under-examined projects such as *Meyer House* (1970-1980), *Valdéz House* (1981-1986) and *Faro del Comercio* (1982-1984) do actually make Barragán a forerunner of the postmodern in Mexico e in Latin America.

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A DIARY OF A POLISH ARCHITECT AND FILM MAKER FROM HIS TRAVELS TO THE WEST. MODERN ITALIAN ARCHITECTURE IN THE POLISH DOCUMENTARIES DATING BACK TO THE TURN OF THE 1950S AND 1960S.

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Abstract

At the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, travelling to the Western countries was to a large extent limited for an average citizen of the socialist Poland. After the democratisation of the country in 1956 travelling options improved a bit, however, the Poles could not travel as freely as they do today. Polish architects could learn about the architecture of Western Europe mainly from such sources as the magazines and occasional travels. In the second half of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, a documentary film became a new medium presenting modern architecture. This article shows how modern architecture of Italy presented in the documentary films of the turn of the 1950s and 1960s supplemented the knowledge of Polish architects on modern Europe in that period. The film image was, on the one hand, a form of a public diary from the travels and, on the other hand, a medium which recorded and preserved the images of places popular with tourists and showed these images to the Polish architects who were not allowed to travel there.

Key words: modern architecture, regionalism, the West, documentary films

Polish architecture before and after 1956

The history of Polish architecture marked with features of modernism dates back to the interwar period[1]. In the years 1918 to 1939 modernism was a trend widely discussed and commented, in Poland and in many other European countries, as an example of a movement propagating modern architecture, so much divergent from the [2]previous styles. Many Polish architects of the times travelled to the West, practising among others in Le Corbusier's studio to gain more insight into the new trend. Experience gained when travelling and

[1] The interwar period in the European architecture
[2]Historical styles, neo-romanticism, neo-gothic, neo-classicism, neo-baroque, neo-classicism and other styles

practising in renown European architectural studios contributed to the propagation of the features of that new, international style in the Polish realia. Nevertheless, international trends have always involved the inclusion of local traditions and culture to extend or modify the 'base model' so that it could encompass the regional tastes and expectations. Somehow Polish modern architecture has always developed with the use of regional motifs, thus, in this case we can talk of a particular type of transposition of modernity encompassing local traditions and conditions. In the period after the 2nd World War modern trends were in the focus of Polish architects. This was abruptly halted in 1949[3] once the state introduced a top imposed style in arts called social realism. The main feature of this trend, conceived in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, was the application of classical styles. Architecture created in compliance with these guidelines, among others in Poland [4]until 1956, featured a number of references to Ancient architecture[5] and shared very little with the ideas of modernism. This period in the Polish architecture was aptly defined by Adam Kotarbiński (1914-2010) at the beginning of the 1980s (Kotarbiński, 1985, p.49). "*The theses posed by social realism were mainly the theses of negations. These negations made numerous 'modernists' in the Western Europe 'personae non gratae'. Cosmopolitanism was the enemy number one.' [own translation]*

After 1956 Polish architecture again turned to modernism. To make up for the time lost, architects, similarly to architects of the interwar period, set off on journeys to the Western Europe to seek inspiration for their artistic activities. Of course, for the reason of the socialist political system in Poland, they could not travel as freely as we can today. They had to apply for a passport and a visa to

[3] In 1949 a heated discussion was pending in Poland regarding further direction of the post-war architecture in the socialist block countries. Modern form with socialist content was no longer acceptable. Functionality was obviously to prevail in the new socialist architecture, however, strong bonds with traditions and elements of the past contributed to strong anchorage of the socialist doctrine in Poland.

[4] A housing estate called "Marszałkowska Dzielnica Mieszkaniowa" (MDM), erected in the downtown area of Warsaw in the period from 1950 to 1952, within the framework of the reconstruction of city centre totally destroyed in the military acts during the war, can be a major example of architecture of social realism in Poland. The estate was designed by Stanisław Jankowski, Jan Knothe, Józef Sigalin and Zygmunt Stępiński. In 2017 the estate was registered into the register of historic monuments as a historic spatial assumption.

[5]The period from 1948 to 1956 in Poland saw numerous republications of works of Ancient architects, among others: "Ten Books on Architecture" by Vitruvius, which were supposed to inspire the contemporary architects with examples how to construct buildings in compliance with the 'classical' spirit.

be able to go to a particular country. Irrespectively of the fact, whether such architect has returned to Poland or not, he was able to share his impressions with others and to create following the principles of works that have inspired him. In 1960, Bohdan Paczowski[6] (1930-2017), a Polish architect, emigrated for economic reasons to Italy. He then described his impressions concerning Italy and Italian architecture of the beginning of the 1960s in an essay published in 2003 in 'Tygodnik Powszechny' magazine. I would like to quote parts of his essay because it, in a very interesting way, refers to the issue of regionalism in Italian architecture of those times.

> The post-war reconstruction of Poland mainly consisted in fast and mechanical multiplication of box-like building structures in the 'vulgarised' international style. The elite of Italian architects voiced their protests against such style of construction and came up with a motto that the building "numbers should be improved and quality multiplied". They postulated that architecture be close with its form and materials to a complex, impoverished realia of the country, close to its region, that it should seek references to traditions and the surroundings that would counterbalance cosmopolitan abstraction with their own culture and realia and that architecture should undertake the issue of ornaments with no inferiority complexes. This architectural "neo-realism" was the first trend in the history of the 20th century architecture undermining the simplified modernity, a pioneer of criticism of the 'international style', later voiced by post-modernists, yet to a much lesser degree. (Paczowski 2003, p.1)

With these comments of Paczkowski in mind, I would like to focus my considerations here on the issue of regionalism. As follows from the presented quotation, the attitude of Italian architects of the 1950s and 1960s was to promote modernity, however, featuring the local traditions and culture. In their mind, modern architecture was not just to copy patterns from other countries but was supposed to adapt them to local realia. In their designs, Italian

[6] Architect and author. He lived abroad since 1960. After 20 years in Italy, he moved to Paris for another 10 years and next to Luxembourg, where he ran the operations of the Foundation of Architecture. He published for "Architectural Reviev", "L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui", „ArchiCREE" and other architectural magazines. He also befriended Witold Gombrowicz, a Polish writer.

architects of that period aspired not only to use the local traditions but also the local building materials derived from local construction traditions or commonly used for hundreds of years in a given town or region. The views of Polish architects in the middle of the 1950s were similar, though demonstrated in practical applications on a smaller scale due to limitations concerning materials, finances or due to ideological constraints of a socialist country. Socialist economy to a large extent promoted the construction of modern buildings that were to serve the utilitarian function for the community, the best example here would be residential, multi-family development. The issue of the shortage of residential units due to the 2nd World War destruction was a topic frequently discussed and analysed by Polish architects. Regional demand for residential units resulted in the erection of numerous constructions, with some features of modernism, yet their quality was questionable, both as regards their designs and construction expertise. To the contrary, regionalism expressed in facilities or spatial assumptions created for the needs of culture, art, relaxation or governmental institutions was of the top quality.

A new voice in the discussion on regionalism was the exhibition organised in 1959 in Warsaw by the Association of Polish Architects. It was aimed to present new trends in Polish architecture after 1956[7]. It shall be added that most of the designs presented at the exhibition and classified into thematic groups[8] represented regional modern architecture. Such regionalism will be here deemed by the author hereof as creative activities meeting the criteria of modernism with strong adherence to the genius loci through the prism of the realities of Polish spatial layout of the 1950s. Modernism as a creative movement has defined general framework of architectural and urban planning activities, with an admissible option of modernism demonstrated via inclusion of the local features.

[7] The Warsaw exhibition displayed works created in the years 1956-1959.
[8] The designs presented at the exhibition were grouped into the following themes: residential buildings, architecture and urban planning of Polish rural areas, educational institutions, sports facilities, health care facilities, public utility buildings, trade and fair buildings, industrial facilities

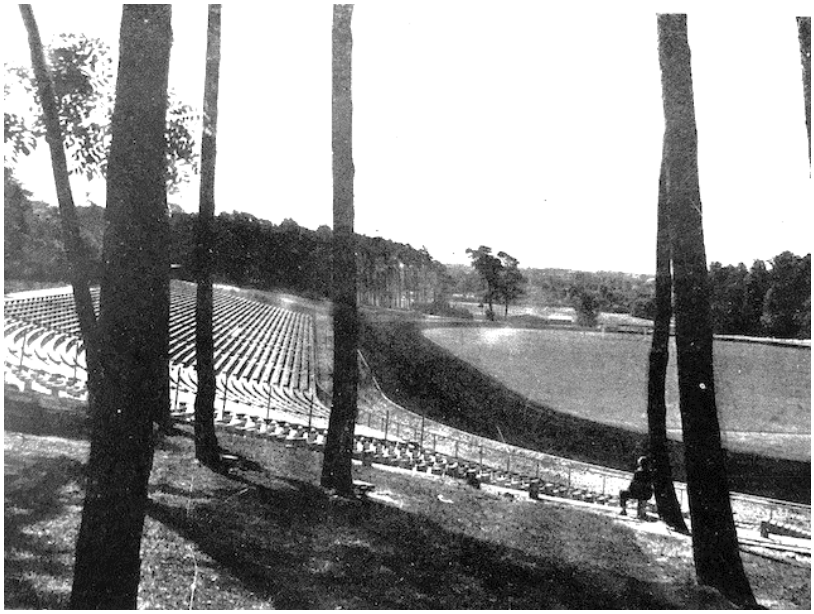

Figure 1. Example of regional architecture Modern stadium of "Olimpia" sports club in Poznan, constructed in the second half of the 1950s. Designed by Poznanian architects: J. Hofman, Z. Samulczyk, Z. Madejczak, H. Gawroński. The form of the facility, with features of modernism, was introduced into the existing spatial structure of green areas of the northern part of the city. Author of the photograph - unknown Source: Wiloch, J. (1959).

To sum up this part of my paper, I would like to quote part of the introduction to the catalogue of the aforementioned exhibition of 1959, where Jacek Nowicki wrote as follows: (Wieloch 1959, p.9) *'An architectural form that meets the conditions of proper composition is a derivative of a building - that is the purpose why it was erected, a derivative of a structure - that is overall terms and conditions for its execution and a derivative of a situation - that is local conditions in the broadest meaning of the term*.'

A DIARY OF A POLISH ARCHITECT AND FILM MAKER FROM HIS TRAVELS TO ITALY IN 1957

In this article focused on the issue of regionalism, I would like to include a description of a particular journey made at the end of 1957 by Mieczysław

Wiesiołek (1921-2011)[9], a film maker and Tadeusz Barucki[10] (1922), an architect, to familiarise Polish viewers, including architects, with modern Italian architecture of the 1950s. The effect of their journey was a documentary film entitled „Notatki o nowej architekturze Włoch" ["Notes on modern Italian architecture"] of 1958[11]. The presented documentary was aimed as a comment on modern trends in Italian architecture of the times. In the 11 minute long documentary, the authors have succeeded in showing a wide range of activities of Italian architects at the end of the 1950s, starting from such renown examples as the railway station Roma Termin[12] or Palzzetto dello Sport[13]. The documentary additionally presented also industrial facilities such as for example the Olivetti factory or public interior of Italian cafés or shops in Milan or Rome. Because as regards Polish architecture at the end of the 1950s the priority theme of discussions was residential multi-family development, the theme was much exposed in the documentary. The audio comments which refer to the achievements of Italian architecture are very positive in this area. Spatial solutions and applied materials that were unknown in Poland or too expensive to be used were much praised. For example the duralumin façades of the Olivetti office towers.

I can only speculate what the most probable origins of that documentary film were. In spring 1956, a group of Warsaw students, taking the advantage of the political thaw, organised a bus tour over Western Europe to familiarise young artists with the achievements of Western architecture, including the works of Le Corbusier. The authors of the documentary that is analysed herein, that is Tadeusz Barucki, an architect and Mieczysław Wiesiołek, a film-maker, took part in that tour. It can be inferred that the architect and the film-maker visited Italy

[9] Polish film-maker and cameraman, film editor, screenwriter and director of documentary films.
[10] Polish architect, representative of modernism, art historian, documentarist of architecture, feature writer
[11]Made in: Poland, in 1958, Genre: A popular science full-colour film, 35 mm, 1 act, 313 m, directed by: Mieczysław Wiesiołek, photos by: Mieczysław Wiesiołek, film editing by: Krystyna Rutkowska, audio: Bohdan Jankowski, made by: Wytwórnia Filmów Dokumentalnych [Documentary Film Studio] (Warsaw)
[12] The building was constructed in the period 1947-1950 in the mature modernist style, as per the design of a group of architects: Callinie, Castellazzie, Fidagatie, Montuorie, Pintonelle and Vitellozzie
[13] Architect Pier Luigi Nervi 1956-1958. Built in accordance with a general plan by architect Annibale Vitellozzi and a project for the reinforced concrete portion by Engineer Pierluigi Nervi—under the direction of Engineer Giacomo Maccagno.

again to one more time study Italian modern architecture and to present it in the form of a short film or that the film material was prepared by them in 1956 during the said tour. Unfortunately, I have been unable to confirm which was the case. The five week journey was summed-up in a short book published in 1957 under the title: *„Architekci autokarem. Czechosłowacja, Austria, Szwajcaria, Francja, Włochy*". ["Architects on a bus tour through Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland, France and Italy"] This minor publication, which comprised a number photographs presenting new European architecture made by the tour participants, has become an interesting testimony to the searches undertaken by Polish architects for new creative directions. The book preface includes the following conclusion of the completed journey:

> 'Five weeks of numerous, strong and fast changing impressions. Caught in the momentary act, they ripen up upon return to compose a synthetic image of a very general nature. […]. It is an important catch - the feeling of scale. The tour participants can now look at their designs, their towns, their work skills, their country and... are able to make comparisons. They are deeply convinced that many things can be improved, that the ideas they come up with do not belong to the world of fantasy only.' (Barucki, Dobrowolski, 1957, p. 5)

As can be observed, for many participants, the tour to Western Europe was an incredible experience, both in professional and social terms. Each of the architects, in their own ways, looked for elements that might enrich their individual designing style. Nevertheless, it must be observed without any doubts that examples of solutions applied in Italian architecture spotted during the tour could give rise to searches for new solutions with the account for regional specifics of Poland. New trends in the Italian architecture of the times and no political limitations imposed on designing and construction of buildings was probably what the Polish architects liked. As well as the already mentioned attachment of Italian architects to the local context and preferences. This stress on importance of creating regional architecture might have been also transposed on the Polish realia.

Italian architecture in the film of 1958 and searches for its impact on the Polish architecture of the second half of the 1950s.

In this part of my paper I would like to focus on the presentation of attempts of the application of the Italian examples shown in the documentary film of 1958 in the Polish architecture designed in that period with the account for the regional aspects. The first building the documentary film under the analysis here shows is the building of the railway station in Rome - Roma Termini [fig. 2]

Figure 2. The building of the railway station in Rome - Roma Termini - frame from the documentary film entitled „Notatki o nowej architekturze Włoch" made by Mieczysław Wiesiołek in 1958. Author's elaboration

The characteristic pavilion of vertical shell walls and wave-like roof was, at the beginning of the 1950s, an example of good practice in modern architecture, acting in contrast to the historical town structure. Rhythmically designed façade and the play of light and shadow made the building look grand. Should we look for references thereto in the Polish architecture of the 1950s, we will find a similar example of the application of alternating concrete and glass vertical geometric planes in the building of the "Kijów" cinema in Cracow designed by Witold Cęckiewicz [fig3]. The cinema model was displayed at the exhibition of new Polish architecture in Warsaw in 1959. This building, similarly to its Italian

(Roman) predecessor, has become an icon of Polish post-war architecture. Seeking for regional features in this building will first mean the analysis of its location in the structure of the historical town. The proposed by the architect modern building block ideally corresponded to the local atmosphere and features of its location. The author, inspired with the works of the Italian architects, created a facility featuring the international style, nevertheless strongly rooted in the atmosphere of the town and the country of its origin.

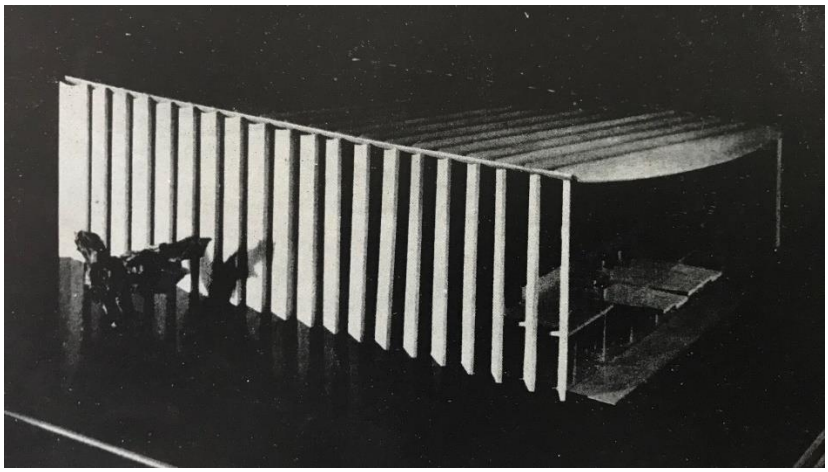

Figure 3. A mock-up model of the "Kijów" cinema, author W. Cęckiewicz. Built after 1960. The design featured similar vertical sub-division of the façade as those incorporated in the ticket office area of the railway station Roma Termini. Author of the photograph - unknown Source: Wiloch, J. (1959).

I would like to refer to another example of a building shown in the documentary film of 1958, namely the building of the Olivetti factory [fig4]. In numerous film frames we can see spacious, well-lit interiors of the factory as presented in the text. Horizontal conception of the building and a very high number of glazed planes underpin its almost immaterial expression. Numerous views of the structure of production halls and office buildings contribute to the building prominent outlook. Italian industrial architecture of the 1950s was characterised with numerous examples of buildings with outstanding forms and advanced engineering and technological solutions. There is no wonder that Polish young architects meticulously presented this building in the documentary film of 1958. In case of Polish industrial architecture, we can observe a similar way of thinking

about the form and structure of the building, for example in the building of the knitwear factory in Warsaw [fig5] presented at the exhibition of new Polish architecture in 1959. Modernity, spaciousness of the interiors and extremely advanced structure are featured on the photo included in the text. We may have the impression that it may well have been constructed in Italy not in Poland.

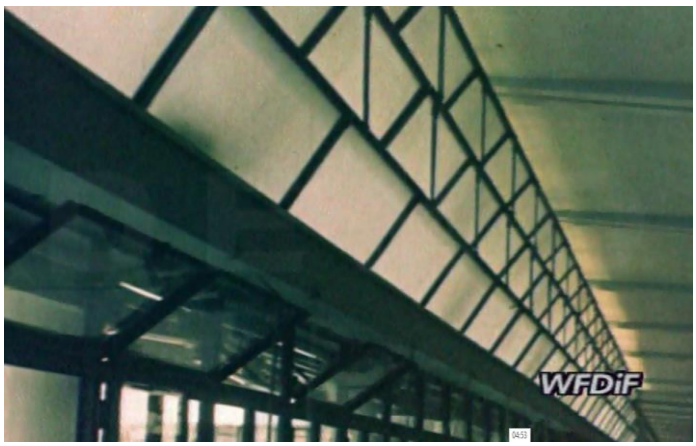

Figure 4. Fragment of the interior of the production hall in the Olivetti factory - frame from the documentary film entitled „Notatki o nowej architekturze Włoch" made by Mieczysław Wiesiołek in 1958. Author's elaboration

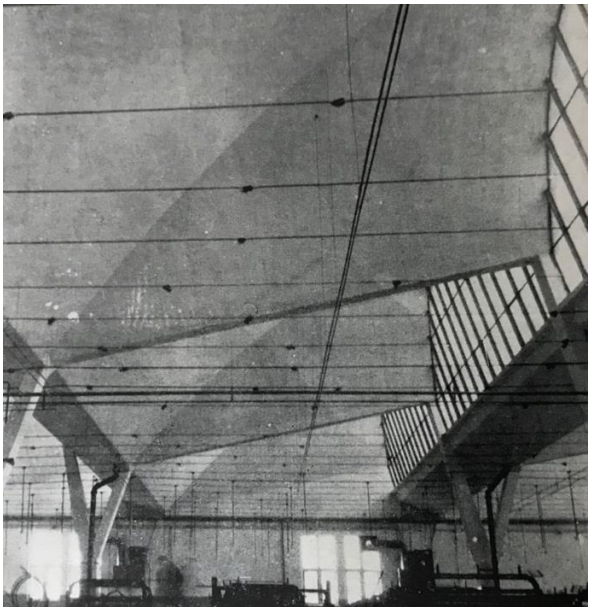

Figure 5. Fragment of the interior of the production hall in the knitwear factory in Warsaw. Designed by: D. Krajewski, H. Marconi. Author of the photograph - unknown Source: Wiloch, J. (1959).

Regionalism in the Polish architecture of the second half of the 1950s.

The process of seeking regional directions of creative activities in Polish modern architecture can be divided into several directions. I would like to discuss them following the template presented in the documentary film of 1958. The first direction is the architecture of public utility buildings. In many instances, these buildings, erected at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, featured modern attire both in terms of the external form and its interiors. The interiors to a certain extent accounted for regional characteristics. Local materials, such as stone or ceramics made by local artists, were often used. The interior of the already mentioned herein building of the "Kijów" cinema in Cracow by W. Cęckiewicz may serve as an example of buildings where local ceramics are used. The end of the 1950s saw an increased interest in the interior design. Many cafés and shops were opened and their interior design, with the atmosphere, selection of colours and applied ornaments, resembled the interiors of shops in Milan presented in the documentary film. The "Wenecja" bar in Warsaw completed in 1961 and designed by Zbigniew Ihnatowicz, Jerzy Sołtan, Adolf Szczepiński may serve as a very interesting example in this respect. Przemysław Szafer, critic of architecture, so wrote about the interior of the bar at the beginning of the 1970s (Szafer, 1972, p.163) '*Outstanding effect both as regards the elevation and interior design was generated through the application of natural materials such as the ceramic bricks, teracotta tiles, raw concrete and glass. As a result [...] extremely vivid colour effects were avoided.'* Residential architecture in Poland presented in the documentary film significantly differed from the Italian examples. Mainly due to different attitude to construction industry in a socialist and a democratic country. Nevertheless, as far as industrial buildings are concerned, architecture in Poland developed at a pace similar to that in Western Europe. Numerous factories erected in those times are characterised with well-thought of spatial and interesting structural solutions. A good example of such a building, compliant with regional practices, yet with features of a modern building, was the furniture factory in Wyszków[14]incorporating in its form repetitive structural components made of concrete. The already referred to P.

[14] The factory design was displayed at the exhibition of Polish architecture of 1956-1959 in Warsaw.

Szafer, so wrote about this building (Szafer, 1972, p.309) '*Large industrial forms cease to be grey and heartless 'production machines and more and more often become true 'landmarks of the epoch'.*

Summary

In case of socialist Poland, an ordinary citizen could not freely travel to Western Europe at the end of the 1950s and at the beginning of the 1960s. After 1956, in the period of the political thaw, travelling opportunities improved a bit, however, were much behind the contemporary travelling freedom. The main sources from which Polish architects could learn about architecture of the Western world were mainly magazines and occasional travels. At the second half of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s modern architecture started to be presented through a new medium, namely a documentary film.

There were two documentary films made in 1956 and 1958 by Mieczysław Wiesiołek, in the form of a diary from the travels, which presented modern architecture of France [15] and Italy that met the criteria of modernism[16]. In his short, 10-12 minute long films, the director presented the richness of new Western architecture seen through the prism of public utility buildings and residential buildings in both countries. Colourful film has enabled him to preserve the achievements of Western architecture observed by a Polish film maker and selected in consultations with the architects.

For the purpose of this article only one of those films has been used for the reason that the copy of the documentary on French architecture was impossible to get. An interesting part of both films is the image of downtown of Paris, Rome, Milan and other cities full of colours and freedom in full contrast to the grey space of Polish towns. A question arises why were France and Italy selected? The relations with these countries were approached with a more positive attitude of the communist regime than the relations with the USA or the

[15] Modern French architecture, directed by: Mieczysław Wiesiołek, made in 1956
[16] Notes on modern Italian architecture, directed by: Mieczysław Wiesiołek, made in 1958

Federal Republic of Germany. These were the countries connected with Poland with historical links - Italy in the Renaissance period and France in the 19th century prior to partitioning of Poland.

The film image, on the one hand, became a medium of a diary from the travels and, on the one hand, enabled the director to preserve the images of the visited places so that other architects, who could not travel to Western Europe, could see them as well. The film image has become a record of changing dynamics of the urban space and its architecture. What is conceived in the form of a design or a concept, is then preserved by the architect on paper or carbon paper, with the intention of a 3D facility, where respective views combine into one space of an architectural work piece and interact with the recipient/user or viewer. Modern architecture and modern town presented in the film under the analysis here, which dates back to the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, is a certain spatial game played between the user of the space and the architectural facility. Polish modern architecture at the end of the 1950s and at the beginning of the 1960s is a theme not yet fully studied and analysed in view of its impact combined with ideology and film industry. Because of the political system, in which it was created (socialist political system), this architecture is marred with a particular, top imposed manner of its interpretation. In view of the political changes, which took place in Poland after 1956 (democratisation)we can see that architecture became a tool of propaganda. For the reason of its international character, on the one hand, it provided a link with Western architecture and, on the other hand, its domestic impact was meant to take advantage of the spatial and visual assets of such new architecture to present it as part of the propaganda of success of the period within the framework of which the citizens and foreigners were to be presented with a positive image of the political system.

The images of modern architectural works and the towns in Polish documentary films of the times were intended to show only their positive spatial, visual and economic aspects in a regional perspective. A documentary as a medium became a perfect tool of showing modern Poland through the prism of newly constructed facilities featuring the criteria of modernism. The epoch is a model research material, the subbase, which allows us to show and grasp the

atmosphere of the epoch through the criteria of modernity recorded in a film frame with the account for the regional features. To sum up my reflections herein, I one more time I would like to quote a phrase from the book: *„Architekci autokarem. Czechosłowacja, Austria, Szwajcaria, Francja, Włochy". ["Architects on a bus tour through Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland, France and Italy"*], which gives explicit testimony why the Polish architects travelled across Western Europe (Barucki, Dobrowolski, 1957, p. 6), '*Participants of the tour aspire to make up for the delays and to be part of modern technology in terms of Polish modern architecture.*'

Acknowledgments

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THE SEARCH FOR A CONTEMPORARY FINNISH ARCHITECTURE
Adaptations of the vernacular tupa in the oeuvre of Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren, Eliel Saarinen, and Alvar Aalto

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Abstract

The impact of vernacular architecture on Finnish architects in the early 20th century has been associated with the search for a national style and the construction of a national identity. However, the adaptation of the vernacular cannot only be seen from this nationalist point of view. Other reasons must be emphasized as well when explaining the exploration of the rural Finnish periphery since the late 19th century and the related interest in the vernacular building heritage. The need to find a contemporary architectural language that reflects modern life in an industrialized country, the attempt to escape the facade architecture of historicism and to achieve an architecture based on the requirements of life, the longing to return to a unity between nature, architecture and humans all explain the increasing interest in anonymous buildings of the periphery. The vernacular is understood as an alternative reservoir of forms and concepts. The discourse in 20th century Finland is reflected in the values attributed to vernacular buildings by the protagonists of the centre and forms the basis for their translation into modern architecture. In the process of adaptation, architectural qualities of the vernacular and international modern tendencies are combined. At the turn of the century, e.g. the vernacular tupa – the main room of the Finnish farmstead – is translated into the spatial concept living hall that originated from 19th century English country house architecture. In the 1930s-1950s, the tupa is used as a point of reference for an open floor plan according to a space continuum. The adaptation of the vernacular must be seen in the context of a reciprocal exchange of ideas, an international discourse about the vernacular throughout Europe and North America that Finnish architects participated in. Vernacularism must be understood as part of an ambiguous architectural modernity.

Keywords: 20th century Finnish architecture – vernacularism – ambiguous modernity – Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren, Eliel Saarinen – Alvar Aalto

The discovery of rural Finland

Since the 19th century – starting with the release of the national epic *Kalevala* (a compilation of folk poetry collected by Elias Lönnrot in Karelia and published in

1835) – the interest in rural culture increased in Finland. The exploration of the periphery, supported by the emergence of a corresponding infrastructure connecting urban centres with rural areas lead to an awareness of the vernacular building heritage. Rural Finland became a popular motif in the arts and vernacular architecture – medieval fieldstone-churches, fortresses and farmsteads – were featured as part of an idealized rural life.

Research trips to the periphery initiated a scientific documentation of the vernacular building heritage. In their application for a travelling scholarship, the architects Yrjö Blomstedt and Victor Sucksdorff emphasize the role of architectural research in East-Karelia for further developments in Finnish architecture. The following travelling report, published as a two-volume book with a large picture section is an attempt to explore vernacular architecture systematically[1]. Based on drawings, floor plans and photographs produced during the journey in Karelia, Blomstedt develops a typology of the buildings and their historical genesis from the simplest form of shelter, the koti (cabin) to the two-storey farmstead typical for the region (Blomstedt, & Sucksdorff, 1900-01).

Attempts like Blomstedt's, even though he uses quotations from the *Kalevala* to back up his development history of Karelian architecture, must be seen in the context of a differentiation that took place in the academic practice in the late 19th century. Various disciplines like historic building research and preservation, ethnology, archaeology and museology were established as independent research fields in Finland at the time. The museumization of rural culture, initiated by the founding of the first Finnish open-air museum on Seurasaari island in Helsinki must be seen in this context, too[2]. Following a preservational agenda, vernacular buildings that were threatened by modernization, e.g. the Niemelä farmstead (1786/1844) were translocated from the periphery to Helsinki in order to form a lively architectural ensemble on the island setting.

[1] Yrjö Blomstedt took the leading part in publicizing the results of the research trip. Already in the 1890s, he wrote several articles for journals (e.g. *Teknikern* and *Suomen Teollisuuslehti*) about the journey including architectural drawings and photographs. In 1902, the book was published in German.

[2] The open-air museum on Seurasaari island was opened in 1909 as a section of the newly founded *Kansallismuseo* (National Museum of Finland) in Helsinki.

The intention of the founders was to assemble building types from all parts of Finland.

The search for the other

The exploration of rural Finland and the related appropriation of the vernacular architecture through journeys, artworks, research and material translocations can be described as an inner exoticism that is not directed at another foreign, i.e. non-European culture, but at the other within one's own territory; both unknown and familiar, exoticized and source of authentic cultural heritage (Krasny, 2010, p. 41). The otherness of one's own periphery represents an alternative pool of forms and concepts that were adaptable in order to achieve a new, i.e. contemporary architectural language for Finland.

(1) A building tradition of one's own

Vernacularism – the appropriation and adaptation of the vernacular – has been associated with the search for a national style and the construction of a national identity. As an expression of emerging nationalism in the late 19th century and the related need to define oneself architecturally as a nation, the adaptation of the vernacular is often understood as a catalyser for Finnish national ambitions. The historic and political situation in turn-of-the-century Finland – the struggle for political and cultural independence from the Russian Empire and the founding of the first Finnish nation state in 1917 – leads to an equation of vernacularism and search for Finnishness (Korvenmaa, 1999. Wäre, 1993).

The term vernacular summarizes the essence of what was projected onto the anonymous architecture of the periphery (Rudofsky, 1964. Preston Blier, 2006)[3]. Vernacular means nativeness, a home-grown architecture that can be located. At the same time, it is a-historical, because it is not based on an academic superstructure like an international canon of styles. Following the concept of

[3] The term vernacular was not used in Finland at that time. Rural architecture was either named after its region of origin, e.g. Karelian architecture (Aalto, 1941), or the Finnish word *kansanomainen* (folkloristic) was used.

invented tradition (Hobsbawm, & Ranger, 1983), the vernacular is understood as one's own building tradition due to its peripheral location. Urban architecture, on the other hand, is seen as spoiled by foreign influences, in the case of Finland by Swedish, Russian and German building traditions, due to its centrality[4]. The periphery fulfils the role of an imaginary region (Moravánszky, 2002) where the desired nation as an imagined 'protonation' was preserved in form of vernacular architecture.

The Finnish pavilion by Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren and Eliel Saarinen at the Paris World's Fair (1900) is one case exemplifying how vernacular references can be interpreted as one's own building tradition. The environment of the World's Fair as an arena of friendly competition between nations already promotes a nationalist reading of the pavilion's vernacular elements, a church-like building structure with granite portals referring to medieval fieldstone-churches and ornamental decorations deriving from the Finnish flora and fauna. The pavilion as a political architecture aims at external self-portrayal and therefore can be read in relation to Finnish national aspirations at the turn of the century.

Although the historical background of the Finnish national movement cannot be disregarded as a driving force of vernacularism, it is necessary to take other factors into account. The adaptation of vernacular architecture can no longer be seen only in connection with nationalism. Neither can it be limited to the period of the national movement (1890-1917) especially in housing where vernacular references can be found throughout the 20th century. As for villas and summerhouses, the reasons behind the adaptation must be re-examined. Most of these buildings hardly gained any broader public recognition apart from a narrow circle of professionals. Hence, they cannot be interpreted as an expression of a national style. Due to their private character, however, they function as an experimental field for new architectural tendencies in which vernacular references had a place. In addition, the adaptation is not limited to

[4] Until 1809, Finland was under Swedish control and only after that became a part of the Russian Empire as a relatively autonomous grand duchy. The senate square in Helsinki with the cathedral, senate building, national library, university and town hall was planned in the 19th century by German architect Carl Ludwig Engel in form of an internationally widespread classicism.

vernacular architecture from Finland, but includes anonymous building traditions from abroad. Alvar Aalto's work, for example, shows a huge impact of vernacular architecture from Italy (Micheli, 2014).

Other reasons must be emphasized when explaining the exploration of rural Finnish periphery since the late 19th century and the related interest in the vernacular building heritage. The need to find a contemporary architectural language that reflects modern life in an industrialized country, the attempt to escape the facade architecture of historicism and to achieve an architecture based on the requirements of life, the longing to return to a unity between nature, architecture and humans all explain the increasing interest in anonymous architecture of the periphery. Eliel Saarinen (1931: 118), for instance, talks about the need to find '*the fundamental form of the time*'. Images of the vernacular besides the attribution as one's own building tradition were created in relation to the discourse about a contemporary architecture in 20th century Finland.

(2) The unity of nature, architecture and humans

In the dichotomy of centre and periphery, the first is characterized as urban and industrialized, a place where the contact to nature is lost. Rural areas, on the other hand, are seen as a reservoir of pre-industrialized times, a place where a life close to nature has survived. The painting *Loft-barns at Korpilahti* by Akseli Gallen-Kallela depicts the close relationship between nature and vernacular architecture imagined by the protagonists of the centre. The two buildings are embedded in the landscape, their foundation melds into the rocky underground and the wooden log-construction is corresponding with the forest in the background. Through the choice of local building materials the architecture is connected to the surrounding landscape (Figure 1).

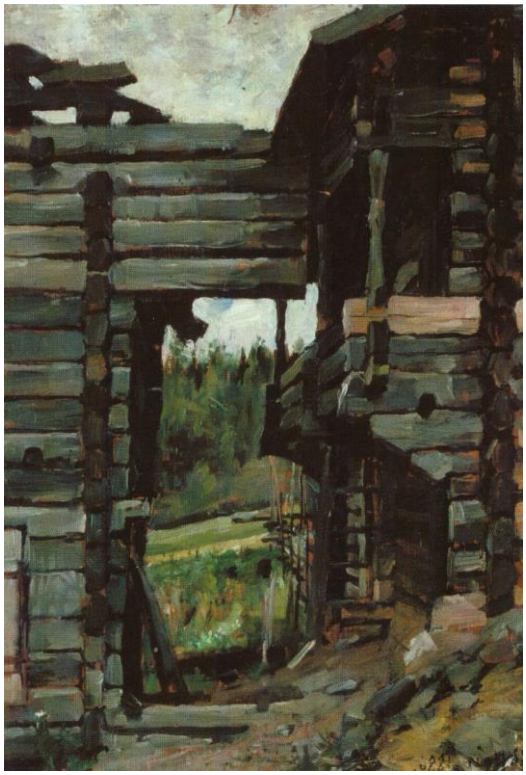

Figure 1. *Loft-barns at Korpilahti*, Akseli Gallen-Kallela, 1886, oil / canvas, 36 x 27 cm, private collection. (Becker, 2002, p. 43)

One of the images projected onto the vernacular, as shown in Gallen-Kallela's painting, is the unity of nature, architecture and humans. In his article, *Karelian architecture* Alvar Aalto states that the value of the region's architecture lies in a desirable, harmonious relationship between humans and their natural and built environment[5].

> The role played by external influences here [Karelia] has been exceptionally small. By this I mean that the region has largely been left to fend for itself and its construction has therefore been dictated directly by natural conditions. Qualities, forms, and methods arising from the native people themselves and the distinctive natural features of the region can therefore be found there in an exceptionally unadulterated form. Karelian architecture thus has special value as a tool for analyzing ways in which

[5] The article was published in the daily newspaper *Uusi Suomi* (02 November 1941).

> human life can be harmoniously reconciled with nature at our latitudes. (Aalto, 1941, p. 117)

Important aspects representing a widespread perception of the vernacular building heritage are mentioned in the passage above. The qualities of the vernacular derive from its peripheral localisation. The significance of architecture as a mediator between humans and their natural surroundings is emphasized. And finally, the periphery, unaffected by industrialization and urbanization, is seen as a reservoir of architectural concepts that are adaptable for a contemporary architecture. The attributed image of unity reflects the demand for a nature-orientated way of building that was voiced e.g. within the discourse about the suburban villa in Finland.

(3) Functionality, Simplicity and Truthfulness

Vernacular architecture, its construction and placement is understood as a sole consequence of climatic-topographic conditions and the use of local materials. Rather than academic styles, the natural needs and the requirements of the inhabitants are the starting point for architectural planing (Aalto, 1930, p. 77). The inner organization of the buildings and their exterior result from functional considerations. Based on the assumption of functionalism, Aalto also refers to the vernacular in regard to his call for flexibility and organic growth. The vernacular (Karelian) house is described by Aalto as a cluster of cells that is growing over time with the changing requirements. A building structure should be as flexible as possible. Only then, it is suitable for the fast-changing modern world, according to Aalto (Aalto, 1941, p. 118).

Connected both to the close relationship to nature and the proclaimed functionality are the attributes simplicity and truthfulness which are projected onto the vernacular. Anything unnecessary is omitted from the architecture, because it is planed only in respect to functional considerations. Local building materials, wood and granite are used to their material properties.

> It [Karelian architecture] is forest architecture pure and simple, with wood dominating almost one hundred percent both as a building material and in

> jointing. From the roof, with its strong log structures, to the moving parts of the building, we find timber, which is generally left naked, without the effect of immateriality given by coloring. Timber is used as close as possible in its natural size, according to its own scale. (Aalto, 1941, pp. 117-118)

Vernacular architecture was used as an argument within the discourse about justice of materials. Blomstedt calls the East-Karelian architecture an example of true wooden style (Blomstedt, & Sucksdorff, 1902, p. 114). On another level, the qualities of the vernacular were connected with the demand to escape historicism. The vernacular was seen as an alternative to an architecture with no connection between facade and internal space (Saarinen, 1931, p. 122). It was promoted as a model of true unity of exterior and interior due to its functional planing.

The adaptation of the vernacular

In a process of adaptation, the attributed architectural qualities mentioned above are translated into a contemporary-modern architectural language. Hence, the modern buildings show a conceptual connection to their vernacular references and similarities can be found more on a general level of architectural understanding, e.g. in the handling of materials or the placement in the environment. The adaptation is not an act of copying or citation, it is a transformation that includes international tendencies of the time. International developments in which the vernacular plays an integral part as well, Arts and Crafts Movement, the continental reform movements around 1900, the ideas of an organic architecture all show that vernacularism must be discussed as part of an international ambiguous modernity (Aigner, 2010).

The inclusion of international tendencies, either related to vernacularism or in general is based on a transfer of ideas – not in form of a one-way street from continental Europe to peripheral Finland, but as a reciprocal exchange, an international discourse Finnish architects participated in. The interconnection of

Finnish and international discourses in modernity was based on journeys and personal networks. Finnish critic and architect Sigurd Frosterus, for example, worked in the Weimar office of Henry van de Velde and Alvar Aalto was a member of *Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne.*

The internationalized character of exhibitions and the circulation of publications function as an additional place for the Finnish participation. Journals like *Studio, Academy Architecture / Architectural Review, Moderne Bauformen* or *Art et Décoration* were available in Finland, too. Buildings from North America, England, Sweden and Germany were discussed in Finnish magazines, as was Finnish architecture in international publications. In the picture section of Hermann Muthesius' *Das moderne Landhaus und seine innere Ausstattung* (The modern country house and its inner furnishing) Pekka Halonen's studio house and villas by Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen are presented next to projects from Great Britain, Germany and Austria (Muthesius, 1905)[6]. Here, Finnish projects are included in the latest developments in housing on an international basis.

Besides the exchange of ideas Muthesius' publication is also an example for the international dimension of vernacularism at the turn of the century. In *Das moderne Landhaus* he names the simple, vernacular town and farmhouse as a model for developing an architecture originated from the requirements of modern time. Muthesius promotes a planing from the interior to the exterior and combines it with criticism of historicist facade architecture (Muthesius, 1905, pp. 3, 7)[7]. Similar demands were voiced by Finnish architects such as Gustaf Strengell, Bertel Jung and Eliel Saarinen (Strengell, 1903. Jung, 1901. Saarinen, 1931).

[6] The picture section includes exterior views of the studio home of Finnish painter Pekka Halonen and of three villas – Villa Sievers, Suur-Merijoki and Villa Miniato – by Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen. Interior views only from the three villas by the architects trio with an clear emphasis on the hall

[7] The interconnection of Finland and Germany was strong at the turn of the century. Besides Hermann Muthesius' *Das moderne Landhaus,* his influential book *Das englische Haus Vol. 1-3* (1904/05) was available in Finland. Paul Mebes' *Um 1800* (1918) was widespread, too. In *Um 1800* Mebes calls for a return to pre-industrialized architecture. Projects by Finnish architects were published in German magazines such as *Moderne Bauformen* and *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration.*

The tupa as a spatial concept

The tupa – the main room of the Finnish farmstead – is a combination of living room, kitchen, common- and workplace. Permanent furnishing, e.g. benches around the walls, a fireplace and movable furniture define areas for various activities: working, gathering, storing, sleeping, cooking and eating. Within the discourse of modern housing, both regarding suburban villas and minimum dwelling, the tupa was referred to as a conceptual model for a multifunctional space.

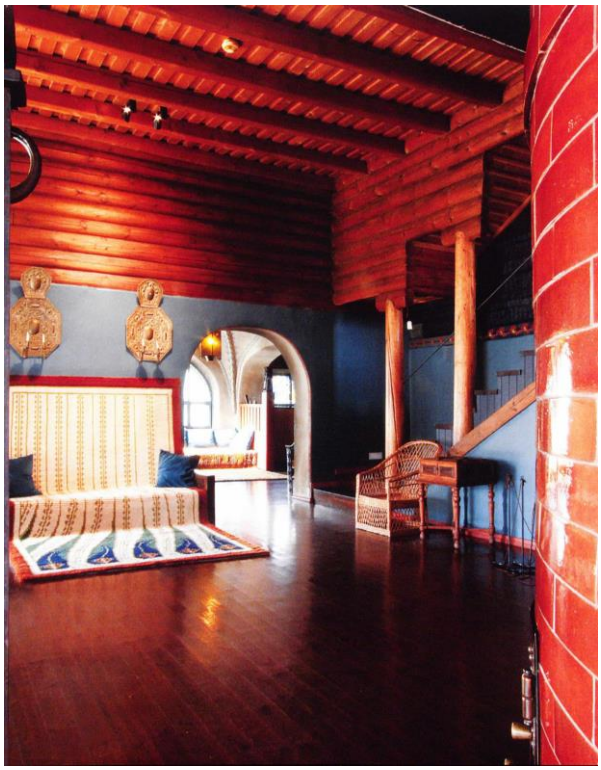

Figure 2. Villa Hvitträsk, living hall at Saarinen's wing with Akseli Gallen-Kallela's tapestry *The Flame*, Hermann Gesellius, Armas Lindgren, Eliel Saarinen, 1901-03. (Jetsonen, & Jetsonen, 2014, p. 76)

In the villas by Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen the idea of the tupa as a multifunctional room, as a central place of public gathering and private living, is translated into the concept of the hall, e.g. at Hvitträsk (1901-03), the studio

home of the three architects. Although the floor plan of Hvitträsk is still marked by single room units, the living hall in Saarinen's wing shows an attempt to create a more open space. Towards the adjoining dining room, for example, the hall is separated only by a wide archway. The different ceilings – in the almost two-storey high hall an open beam construction and in the broader dining room a vault – support the spatial differentiation between living and dining area. The hall gives access to the garden and the open staircase links it with the upper floor (Figure 2). Even though the hall functions as a connecting element in the organisational structure of the floor plan, the room is no mere entrance hall. In the living hall, the multifunctionality adapted from the vernacular tupa is translated into a subdivision of spatial units, nooks for sitting and more intimate gathering, a fireplace area, a central space for more public meetings and a staircase as an inner transport way. A comparable spatial concept can be found at the architects' Villa Miniato (1901-02) and at Villa Hvittorp (1901-02) where the hall is subdivided by nooks and varying floor levels to mark the different functional areas for gathering, reading, sitting and playing music (Figure 3.).

Figure 3. Villa Hvittorp, living hall, Eliel Saarinen, watercolour, 1902. (Jetsonen, & Jetsonen, 2014, p. 60)

At Hvitträsk, the furnishing designed by Saarinen has an important role in defining functional space units. The fireplace, which is an integral part of the vernacular tupa, functions as a joint between the spatial parts and gives the room a sense of warmth and comfort. Due to the wooden wall treatment and the open beam construction of the ceiling, the room appears to be a log house within the villa. The adaptation of the spatial concept tupa is enhanced by an aesthetic reference to the traditional construction of vernacular farmsteads in Finland. The tapestry *The Flame* by Akseli Gallen-Kallela supports this, too. It is an adaptation of the Finnish ryijy-rug. The vernacular weaving technique and the traditional placement on the wall are combined with the formal language of Art Nouveau (Figure 2)[8].

The concept of the living hall as a combination of living, common and reception space derives from the 19th century country house architecture in England and North America. Via international journals and especially German publications such as *Neubauten in Nordamerika* (Graef, 1897-1904) the idea of the hall was introduced into the Finnish housing discourse at the turn of the century[9]. Anglo-American examples offered points of reference for the housing question in Finland. The planing from interior to exterior, the resulting asymmetry of the buildings and a comparable adaptation of the vernacular in English and American architecture at the time, supported the inclusion of Anglo-American tendencies into housing projects in Finland. As shown in the villas mentioned above, the international concept living hall was adapted in the work of Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen as an outer structure and was combined with the adaptation of the multifunctional tupa as a concept of inner spatial organization.

In the article *From doorstep to living room,* the idea of the hall was voiced by Alvar Aalto as well.

[8] There are different versions of the ryijy-rug *The Flame* by Akseli Gallen-Kallela. One is also shown in the living hall at Villa Miniato. One version was presented as part of the Iris-room in the Finnish Pavilion at Paris' World's Fair (1900).

[9] American architecture, especially the work of Henry H. Richardson, was discussed in Finnish magazines (e.g. *Suomen Teollisuuslehti / Suomen Teollisuuslehden Rakentaja)*, but often without pictures. German publications on American architecture function as an additional source.

> One of the possible ways to arrange and furnish the entrance section is offered in the English hall. [...] The British psyche is foreign to us and does not readily take root in our soil, but one feature decidedly deserves to be noted. One of those large, spacious rooms with an open fireplace, a rustic floor and a form which differs from that of the other rooms has a psychological function apparent to the sensitive eye. (Aalto, 1926, p. 52)

Aalto defines the hall as a contact zone, a place of transition between interior and exterior: '*It* [the hall] *symbolizes the open air under the home roof*', according to Aalto (1926: 52). He also relates the concept of the hall to the vernacular Roman atrium house. Both the hall and the atrium are the central spaces of the house, function as an entrance situation, but are no mere circulation areas. They are semi-public living spaces that give insights into the inner structure of the building. The article reflects Aalto's interest in Italian vernacular architecture and gives an outlook to later projects that show an adaptation of the atrium house.

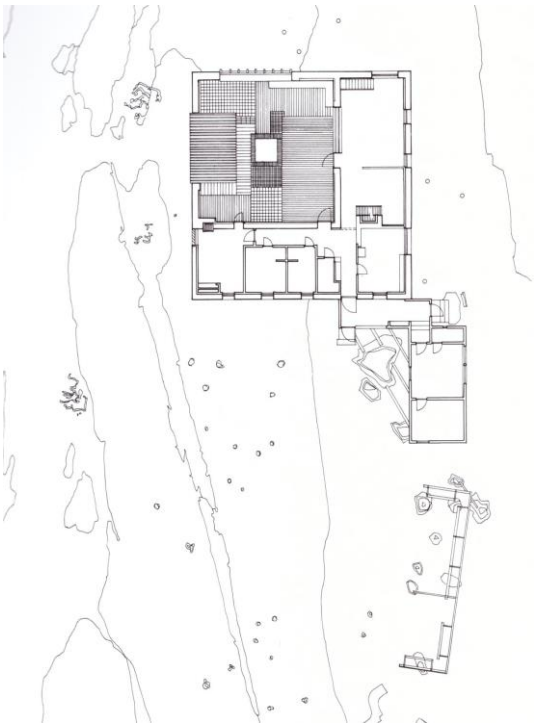

Figure 4. Muuratsalo Experimental House, site plan, Alvar Aalto, 1953. (Weston, 1995, p. 117)

In the Muuratsalo Experimental House, Aalto combines the idea of the atrium as an interspace between interior and exterior with the adaptation of the tupa. For Aalto, the tupa as well as the atrium provides an alternative concept of room that is not defined as an enclosed cell, but as an open space (Aalto, 1930, p. 77). In Aalto's housing projects, the tupa is translated into an open floor plan according to a space continuum. At the Muuratsalo Experimental House, that open living room, following the multifunctional qualities of the tupa, extends into the atrium-like courtyard which becomes an interior room in the exterior space (Figure 4). A similar relation between inside and outside can be found in Aalto's Villa Mairea. Here, the open living room is structured by varying floor levels and can be subdivided by moveable wall-units in order to create functional areas like a library, study and exhibition space (Figure 5). The spatial organization is based on the requirements of the inhabitants, a family of art collectors and can be changed in regard to the requested use of the living room. Here, the multifunctionality of the tupa as a concept of inner spatial organization meets Aalto's call for organic flexibility.

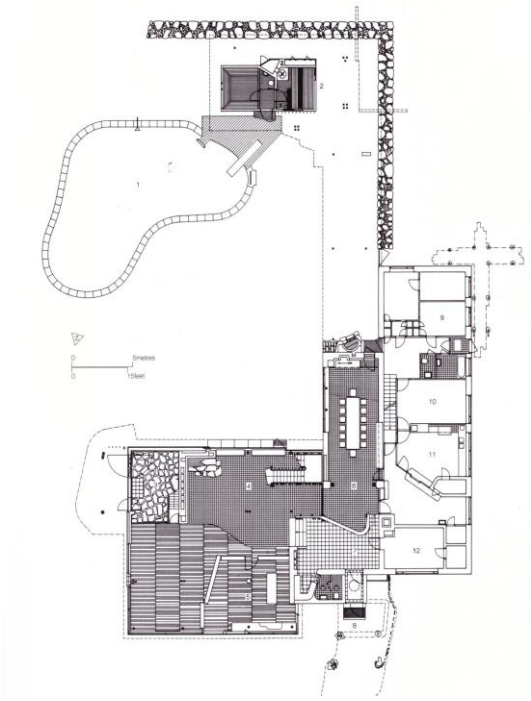

Figure 5. Villa Mairea, ground floor plan, Alvar Aalto, 1937-1939. (Weston, 1995, p. 86)

Conclusion

The adaptation of the tupa in the works of Gesellius, Lindgren, Saarinen, and Aalto is based on the attributed value as a multifunctional room, including international modern tendencies at each time. At the turn of the century, the vernacular tupa is translated into the spatial concept living hall that originated from the 19th century English country house architecture. In the 1930s-1950s, it is used as a point of reference for an open floor plan connecting it with the idea of a space continuum that was internationally discussed in the context of Functionalism, Neues Bauen and International Style.

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TITLE MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND LOCAL TRADITION IN 1950`S PORTUGUESE NATIONAL INNS (POUSADAS DE PORTUGAL)

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Abstract

The first plan of Pousadas de Portugal was promoted in the context of the celebrations of 1940`s centenary of national independence and was integrated in the "policy of the spirit" led by António Ferro, who considered the interior of the country as the natural environment of the highest national qualities. The projects were mostly designed by Miguel Jacobetty Rosa and Rogério de Azevedo, architects born at the turn of the 19th century, who, despite evidence of syntactic experiences of modernist inspiration, explore figures linked to the model of the Portuguese house developed by Raul Lino
In 1954, the second plan maintains the legal framework created for the former, where it is stated that the inns to be constructed were to be integrated as far as possible into the picturesque of the regions. However, the architects now assigned to to carry out the projects were born in the late 10s and early 20s, and were part of the so-called "modern generation" that attended the 1948 congress as students or newly graduated.
In fact within this generation of architects we can identify different concerns about architecture, some of them engaged in developing the modern agenda that they felt was not yet sufficiently accomplished in Portugal, and others more concerned with the concrete conditions of each specific situation and their poetic appreciation. Nevertheless, all of them rejected the model of the Portuguese house that was still favoured by Portuguese authorities.
This paper proposes to discuss these different concerns, and thus to ponder on the local reception of *the Modern Movement, by comparing two projects for the second plan of Pousadas de Portugal, one by Ruy Athouguia in Nazaré, which was never built, and other by Manuel Taínha in Oliveira do Hospital that had to wait several years to be constructed.*

Keywords: Regionalism; Place; Figure; Modernism

In 1933, the year of the constitution of the Estado Novo regime in Portugal, the magazine *Notícias Ilustrado* launched a campaign to promote a new tourism strategy for the country. Objecting to large luxury hotels, and specially to their international and cosmopolitan pretensions, this campaign favoured the idea of small hotels scattered around the country, characterized by national and regionalist features. The magazine commended the action of heritage and

landscape enhancement carried out by the Spanish Patronato Nacional de Turismo (PNT) in 1928 with the creation of the Junta de Paradores y Hosterias del Reyno[1], which was supplemented with the Albergues de Carretera[2] located on the routes between the main Spanish cities.

This crusade culminated with the organization of an exhibition of projects for a *hotel modelo* (model hotel) with 25 rooms in eight versions, one for each Portuguese province (Lobo, 2012), with a program developed by Raul Lino (1879-1974). This architect was known for his adverse position towards internationalism and modernist rationalism, and had widely written on the subject. In his book, *Casas Portuguesas: Alguns apontamentos sobre o arquitectar das casas simples* (Portuguese Houses: Some notes on the architecting of simple houses), published also in 1933, he presented a set of water colours showing different architectural solutions for different regions in Portugal.

The architects chosen to develop each of the eight regional versions were granted a small subsidy from the National Tourism Council, which denotes the importance that this issue was assuming in the national panorama. Nevertheless, according to Susana Lobo (2012) the final projects shown in the exhibition seem mostly to result in a kind of enlarged versions of the examples illustrated in Lino's book, adapted to the hotel function.

Even if some of the younger architects involved in these projects would later become important figures in the implementation of the Modern Movement in Portugal - for instance Faria da Costa (1906-1971) or Keil do Amaral (1910-1975) – the designs seem in fact to have as main concern the enforcement of a conventional language based on Lino's pictures, judging from the images we

[1] After the inauguration in 1928 of the Parador de Turismo de Gredos, whose location is said to have been chosen by King Alfonso XIII himself, the Junta de Paradores y Hosterias del Reyno is constituted whith the mission of stablishing inns in singular buildings with a long history and an enviable monumental heritage, as well as on locations in geographical areas of great natural interest.

[2] According to Suzana Lobo (2012, 439) these hostels for drivers were thought from a cost-effective perspective, which determined the definition of a single, general type. Unlike the Paradores, where each building was in itself an exception, what mattered here was the economy of means for their construction and maintenance, and their easy recognition by drivers in transit.

could see which are particularly eloquent in the case of the proposal for Minho by Manuel Marques (1890-1956).

Figure 1. Proposal for the region of Minho by Manuel Marques (1890-1956)

The results of the *hotel modelo* challenge – which were shown on display by the country – made it clear that Lino's functional program was exaggerated in scale, but were influential in defining a new paradigm for national tourism. In 1936 the concept of *Pousada* was finally proposed at the 1st National Congress of Tourism, formulated by Francisco de Lima who conceives it as affordable inns with a passing character and reduced number of rooms, located outside towns and with regional manner in their construction and furniture. As pointed out by Lobo (2012, pp. 445-446) the important thing in this new concept would be the "*sober and economic comfort, translated into a simple environment, with clearly regional outlines and, therefore, of national character*." According to the author one could define it between the *Parador* and the *Albergue de Carretera*, in a sort of reduced version of the *Hotel Modelo*

The idea was adopted by the central authority that would take care of building the *pousadas*, obeying a national purpose in tourism development which also

included the setting of an image for national culture. Francisco de Lima's thesis will directly influence the tourism policy developed by Secretariat of National Propaganda (SPN)[3] in the 1940`s. As stated in the Decree-Law[4], that in 1941 regulates the use of the denomination *pousada* and the terms of it's commercial exploitation, these inns "*should be integrated as far as possible, due to their local style and colour, into the picturesque of the regions, taking into account the essential goal of tourism propaganda".*

The first plan of *Pousadas de Portugal* was promoted in the context of the commemorations of 1940`s double centenary, celebrating both 800 years of national identity and 300 years since the restoration of independence, and was integrated in the "policy of the spirit" led by António Ferro (1895-1956), the director of SPN, who considered the interior of the country as the natural environment of the highest national qualities. Ferro had been exploring this regionalist feature since the foundation of SPN, in 1934, and showed it in initiatives such as the Popular Art Exhibition (1936) or the Contest for the Most Portuguese Village in Portugal (1938).

The notion of a national cultural identity embracing declinations in its regional circumstances was favoured by the regime. This posture, that finds fertile ground in the romanticism of the beginning of the century, was naturally championed by Raul Lino. But despite the point stated by Lino on the importance of thinking the house according to the needs of its habitants, and on the necessity of finding answers for each case, and regardless of his warning in the 3rd edition (1941) of his book *Casas Portuguesas* about envisaging the images as examples and not as models to be copied, this work would be mainly understood as a formal prescription.

> The formal repertoire associated with the Portuguese house, as well as the idea of the need to diversify the solutions according to the regions, were eventually naturalized in national architectural culture and, from the thirties, can also be found in other architectural programs examples, of

[3] SPN had the tutelage of tourism since December 1939
[4] Article 2 of Decree-Law no. 31 259, Series I of 9th May 1941

> which the more evident examples are the so-called centennial schools and the *pousadas* of SPN. (Maia, Cardoso, Leal, 2013, p. 21)

The projects for the first plan of *pousadas* were mostly designed by Miguel Jacobetty Rosa and Rogério de Azevedo, architects born at the turn of the 20th century, who explore figures linked to a model of the Portuguese house inspired in Raul Lino, along with syntactic experiences of modernist inspiration. But even though the relationship with the so called picturesque of the region is clearly influenced by an aestheticization of Portuguese culture, we can still acknowledge a particular concern with the specificities of the place. In this the concept of *pousada* differs from the one of *albergue de carretera*, that was based on type solutions.

Susana Lobo (2006, p. 45) considers the functional and formal rationalization of this *pousadas* as a frankly modernist language, although superficially coated with 'Portuguese taste'. While Jacobetty's projects were translated into pure, cylindrical, or prismatic volumes, hidden under eaves, arches, pergolas and tiles, those of Rogério de Azevedo reflected a volumetric dynamism coated with granite, topped with tile roofs, porches and shutters. But even if this effort in pursuing a modern language is recognisable, one cannot help noticing that there is still an hesitation in the definition of the architectural elements (for instance the spans of the windows) that shows that the difficulties in affirming this modernist language was not just in their «dressing up».

Figure 2 - *Pousada* in Serém, by Rogério de Azevedo (1942)

In 1954, the second plan, directed by the Ministry of Public Works with the collaboration of SNI[5], the successor of SPN, establishes an intervention strategy that differs from that of the previous program in which the inns were thought of as places of stopover on the main national routes, according to Susana Lobo (2004), and seeks now to establish places of stay that can promote local tourism. The number of rooms now duplicates, but the scale is still domestic and the legal framework established for the first series remains valid.

With the outcome of Second World War, we are now in a time when the Portuguese regime moderates its nationalist impetus. On the other hand, the Portuguese architects already show a group consciousness and a level of information about what is being done in the rest of the world, especially in Europe, which contrasted with what was happening 15 years earlier, when their theoretical training seemed to be mostly self-taught, solitary and, in general, limited.

In 1948, the first National Congress of Architects had been held, and there, according to Portas (1973), a unit image of the class was achieved around two points: the rejection of a model for national architecture and a warning call to the problem of housing in Portugal and the role of modern architecture and urbanism in its solution. On the first point, a decision is made to carry through a survey on Portuguese popular architecture, seemingly with the objective of proving that there is no single model in Portuguese vernacular architecture that can serve as a dominant pattern for national architecture. Regarding the second point, the result of Congress 48 apparently consecrates the rationalism of the Modern Movement at a time when it was already under review in the rest of Europe.

The architects assigned to to carry out the projects for the second plan of *pousadas* were born in the late 10s and early 20s. They had attended the 1948 congress as students or newly graduated, and were part of the so-called "modern generation". In fact, within this generation we can identify differences

[5] SNI (National Secretariat of Information, Popular Culture and Tourism) appeared in 1945, replacing SPN (Secretariat of National Propaganda), which was created in 1934 with António Ferro as director. Ferro will also be director of SNI until 1950.

in their concerns about architecture, some of them engaged in developing the modern agenda that they felt was not yet sufficiently accomplished in Portugal, and others already claiming for its revision, more interested with the concrete conditions of each specific situation and their poetic appreciation. Portas (1973) would name this two tendencies as French-Brazilian, the first, and Italian-Nordic, the latter. Nevertheless, both of them rejected the model of the Portuguese house that was still favoured by Portuguese authorities.

Despite the initial vote of confidence in the new generation, the design of Ruy d`Atouguia for a *pousada* in Nazaré, even though supported by General Directorate of National Buildings and Monuments (DGEMN), is invalidated by SNI which invokes non-compliance with the provisions of *Decree-Law no. 31 259*, namely its reference to the style, colour and picturesque of the regions (Lobo, 2004, p. 92).

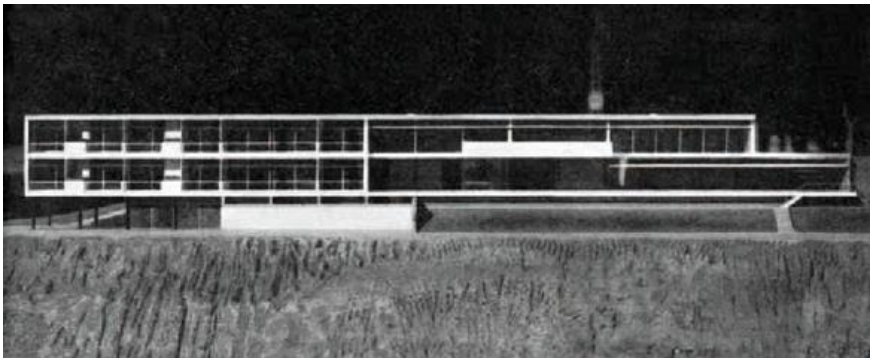

Figure 3. Pousada in Nazaré, by Ruy d`Athouguia (1954)

In fact, this project rejects any figure of regional culture, concentrating its composition on the building's spatial and formal coherence, along with its relationship with site and landscape. In addition to the rigour in the composition and the attention given to the place, it explores formal and constructive vocabulary of Modern Movement. In its descriptive memory, Athouguia states: "Its special location, the very special, unique, character of the village, where the sobriety and asceticism of the plastic expression of the buildings determine the

need for an architecturally pure and direct work, without condescension to easy decorativism" (Correia, 2012, p. 312).

The architect goes on considering that the interest of the site is its the panoramic view, that it should play an important part in the composition and that its enjoyment should be the *raison d'etre* of this pousada. For this reason, he explains, the building should be in the edge of the cliff and, because it so becomes cropped in the sky and visible from faraway, its volume should be pure and with easy reading so it looked like it landed on place

In 1957, the drawings of the *pousada* in Nazaré were published by the magazine *Arquitectura*[6]. This issue is precisely the first to be edited by a new generation of architects, who sought to express the tendencies that were then beginning to dominate the international architectural debate, and that called into question the Modern Movement principles. The editors acknowledge the qualities of the project, namely its functionality and the relationship between the building and the site, enhancing the orientation of the area reserved for guests, "f*ully open on the sea and obeying a previous study of insolation*", but accuse him of being carried out "*within an idealistic understanding of the architectural phenomenon*", and criticize the adoption of an architectural language inspired by "*International Style*". We can recognise in this group the italian-nordic tendency named by Portas (1973) and which he was part of. In fact, according Correia (2015) Nuno Portas acknowledged being the author of this text.

Curiously, the label of idealism that the editors put to the design of Athouguia fits apparently as well to the architecture of the first plan of *pousadas*, where an idealized image of national identity is summoned. And as far as the relation with the site goes one may say just the same that this is a project meant to be build in that precise place. Besides the argument of the use of an architectural language inspired by International Style, which sounds also idealistic, the real issue here seems to be the the amount of abstraction that the architect used and how it may have impoverished the relationship with the surroundings.

[6] *Arquitectura*, nº 57-58, Janeiro-Fevereiro 1957.

Graça Correia Raggazzi (2007, p. 35) praises the exemplary relationship that the building establishes with the extraordinary landscape, and the way the pure volume lands on the site that "*functions as a kind of geological abstraction, with a bridge part, receding and creating shade to reinforce the emergence of the main body that looks to levitate*". She goes on stating that the shape of this *pousada* is "*the sensitive manifestation of a model of assumption of the place from which it emerges starting from a formal - or visual - approach that has nothing to do with the more or less scenographic contextualisms so usual in those years*". However true this may be, the approach followed by Athouguia clearly elects just a few features of the place (namely the view) in order to achieve its power and consistence.

In September 1958, the magazine *Arquitectura* returns to the subject publishing "*Quatro Novas Pousadas*" (Four New Inns) pointing out in these projects the passage from the understanding of a "narrow and adulterated regionalism" to the sense of scale and intimacy of the surrounding. The text emphasises the common care in all the proposals with the integration in the pre-existing environment, both in terms of interior space and external treatment, and identifies a new posture before the territory, in which the building is not only considered by itself, but integrated in the context.

The works shown referred to *pousadas* in Vilar Formoso, Portela da Gardunha, Oliveira do Hospital, and Valença do Minho, designed by the architects Nuno Teotónio Pereira, Francisco Blasco, Manuel Tainha and João Andressen, respectively, who were about the same age as Athouguia. The editors praise the four projects for demonstrating a realistic attitude, responding actively to the country's life "*each in its own situation and demands*", and find there the first signs of a decisive stage in the evolution of Portuguese architecture. They consider that the dogmas of modern movement are reverted in the way each one individually faces the function of dwelling, avoiding the repetitive character of the rooms and the neutral character of the collective spaces of a hotel, in the importance attributed by everyone to the integration of the building in the site, and in the the fact that they all refused to reduce space to the functional dimension.

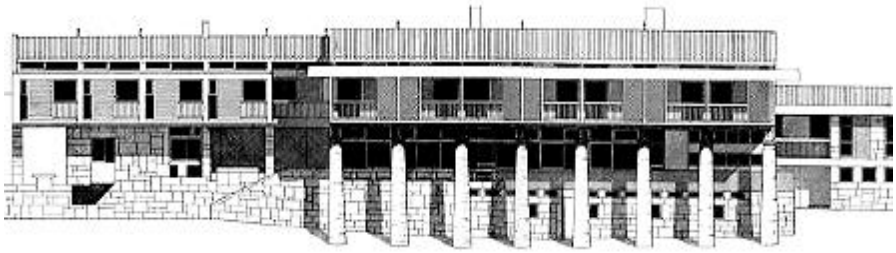

Fig 4 – *Pousada* in Oliveira do Hospital, by Manuel Tainha (1955-58, 1971)

The *pousada* in Oliveira do Hospital, designed between 1955 and 1958, seeks a dialogue between vernacular construction techniques and the spatial, structural and compositional contributions from modern architecture, in tune with the lines of critical reflection arising from the survey on Portuguese popular architecture, which was launched in the same year that the architect receives this order[7], and in whose organization he participated. Implanted in a sloping terrain, the building takes advantage of its panoramic position and solar orientation at the same time that it affirms its role as an element of valorisation of the landscape in continuity with the local culture. But simultaneously with the reinterpretation of traditional figures and attention to the place, it explores the tensions created by the relations between interior and exterior, closed and open, light and shadow, which also call for modern spatial experiences.

Moreover, in this work the use and reinterpretation of figures is not limited to the universe of local traditional culture. Along with the knowledge of the Nordic experiences of Alvar Aalto and Arne Jacobsen, we can recognize the influences of the Italian post-war masters, in which the most evident is revealed in the appropriation of the colossal order of columns in stone masonry that Franco Albini used in his «Pirovano refuge», a hostel for young people with a ski school built between 1948 and 1952 in Breuil-Cervinia, Aosta valley. But these figures are not treated as self-referential entities, in the manner of those used in the

[7] Although the first initiative for implementation took place in 1949, by initiative of the National Union of Architects, Government support only arrived in 1955, through the granting of a subsidy under the conditions established by Decree-Law No. 40 349, of October 19th. The publication of the work will only take place in 1961.

first series of *pousadas*, but rather as signs that assume new meanings in the specific discourse of a concrete project.

Figure 5. "Pirovano refuge" by Franco Albini in Breuil-Cervinia (1948-1952)

The concern about the use of figures within modern architecture is up to date with the international debate at the time and reflects the distinction made by Nuno Portas (1973) between French-Brazilian and Italian-Nordic tendencies in Portugal. This issue will cause Alan Colquhoun`s proposal in 1977 to consider a new approach to the history of Modern Movement where the fundamental dialectic would no longer be between form and function but between form and figure, in which form would refer to a configuration with natural meaning, or no meaning, and figure would refer to a configuration whose meaning is given by culture. According to Colquhoun (1977) while the notion of figure includes conventional and associative meanings, the one of form excludes them. This dialectic would put the pousada in Nazaré on one side and the pousada in Oliveira do Hospital on the other.

In the text accompanying the publication of his project, Manuel Tainha does not mention the transalpine provenance of the figure of the columns in masonry of

lamelliform stone, but he explains that its use is part of a specific project strategy which seeks the harmonic conjugation between a punctuated structure, the one of the colonnade that tries to respond to the needs of continuous tearing,"compatible with the discursive reading of the landscape", and a linear, solid-walled granite structure, which meets the requirements of involvement and recollection.

The author also explains the concern he had in not betraying the expressive value of the landscape without, however, allowing it to seize everything, something he considers to be "extremely boring"-and here the project for Nazaré comes to our mind- thus justifying the option of considering it not as an end in itself but as an element of valorization of the internal space. The essential thing would be "the organization of a life that one would like to be possible among human beings". Through the creation of a central courtyard, which Tainha designates as a domesticated outer space, around which the architectural spaces are articulated, he tried to explore the contrast between the personalization of internal spaces and their dilution in the face of external requests, or between their introversion and their extraversion. Finally, the author refers to the concern in this project to move from an "exclusive notion of building" to a "more complex notion of site".

This distinction is also essential to understand the difference in project strategies for the *pousadas* in Nazaré and in Oliveira do Hospital, both implanted in sites that Tainha refers to in his text as equally overrunning and dominating. In addition to the formal approach and the eclectic use of figures, the second is distinguished from the first by the spatial approach that seeks to define a habitable place that goes beyond the limits of the architectural object and is based on an interpretation of the environmental values present.

Marti Aris (2000) makes a distinction between abstract form and figurative form in which the first refers to the essential internal constitution of an object and the latter to the objects appearance. Thus, the abstract procedure decants the architectural task in its syntactic aspect and the figurative elaboration grants greater weight to the semantic facet. For Marti Aris, when working in the field of

figuration, it is truly difficult to define the character of the building without recourse to conventionalism, just as when working in the field of abstraction the greatest difficulty lies in finding the essential without making simplifications.

Coming back to the *hotel modelo* we may easily recognise a great deal of figuration inspired in Raul Lino`s pictures which results in an insurmountable conventionalism. Being a challenge for a model hotel, with all the *a priori* we read about and no effective site, it is only fair to say that this would probably happen. In the case of the first plan of *pousadas* the use of figuration is far more complex because the regional motifs appear now to be mixed with figures of Art Deco or early Modernism provenance, and all of this is filtered by an actual site, as well as a client and a program. Anyway, the formal language does not show enough consistency to assimilate these figures, and the result is still very much supported by conventionalized meaning which, we must remember, was then actively enforced by SPN.

It is within the second plan of *pousadas* that we can find a better example to gauge this dialectic between abstraction and figurativism, or form and figure, even if the only example of abstraction, the one of Nazaré, has never been accepted by the regime and therefore has never been built. Although the real reason for this rejection is its alienation from a conventional meaning that was meant to be implemented and not the relation it establishes with the place – which is much more intense here than in the first *pousadas* or in the *hotel modelo* - we cannot help feeling that the approach somehow simplifies this relationship, in particular by focusing mainly on the issue of sight. On the other hand, the strategy in Oliveira do Hospital exploits the use of figures, even though not those that the regime would expect (and some of them may be said of international provenance), to develop a complex dialogue with the site that in our opinion gets closer to capturing the uniqueness of the place.

Therefore, the differentiation used by the editorial staff of the magazine *Arquitectura* about an idealistic approach (in the case of Nazaré) and a realistic one (in the case of Oliveira do Hospital and of the other 3 projects) proves consistency in this sense. In fact, the approach of the first *pousadas* with its

reference to a Portuguese life with aestheticised qualities and Athouguia's vision of an object perched on the landscape that lives for the landscape (however well designed it may be) in a way share an idealistic vision that risks to leave out quite significant aspects of the regional reality.

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LEWIS MUMFORD, HENRY-RUSSELL HITCHCOCK AND THE RISE OF "BAY" REGIONALISM

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Abstract

In the fall of 1949, the San Francisco Museum of Art held Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region*. As an illustrated manifesto of Lewis Mumford's regional stance, the exhibition epitomised one of the major turning points in the postwar debates surrounding the question of the autonomy of a truly American modern tradition. Unlike Mumford's 1941 first sight appreciation of the complex reality of Northern California – resulting in an enduring love affair with several generations of its architects, urban planners and social reformers, from William Wurster to his Telesis protégés–, Henry-Russell Hitchcock's evaluation of West Coast architecture was not very high, and his early elucidation evolved through ambivalent considerations. However, as this study tries to demonstrate, the 1949 show would contribute to mellowing the Eastern critic's strict formal and visual criteria delimiting his and Philip Johnson's International Style definitions, which ultimately led him chair the 1962-66 Modern Architecture Symposia at Columbia University to reassess the American reception of European modernism. Conversely, this paper aims to examine the extent to which the conflict of perceptions and interests between the two Coasts brought about the 1949 show as part of a well-orchestrated campaign that had begun around a decade before Mumford wrote his renowned 1947 New Yorker piece triggering a controversy on the existence of a 'Bay Region style'. Contrary to prevailing assumptions that this exhibition was a delayed reaction to the 1948 MoMA symposium organised by Johnson to refute Mumford's opinions, or that it merely tried to make the most of the national polemic, the exhibition was part of a coherent regionalist agenda whose main success was, precisely, that Mumford, Hitchcock and other influential actors in the United States were exposed, indoctrinated and/or seduced by the so-called Bay Area School and its emphasis on social, political and environmental concerns.*

Keywords: Bay Area School, California regionalism, Lewis Mumford, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, postwar debates on architectural identity

SFMA and the early promotion of Bay Region architecture

In September 30, 1938, the San Francisco Museum of Art (SFMA) premiered its first great architectural exhibition entirely devoted to Bay Area modernism. It was the first of a series of formative architectural actions which, counting on the strong support of SFMA's founding director, Dr Grace McCann Morley, contributed decisively to the process of codification of "Bay" regionalism.

Figure 1. 1938 *AIA Architecture Exhibition* at SFMA. (From *Architectural Forum*, December 1938).

As Morley's priority was to make SFMA's architectural programme an educational challenge[1] to broaden the layperson's perspectives and to prompt visitors' curiosity, William Wurster, chairman of the 1938 exhibition, put local architect and talented graphic artist Ernest Born in charge of designing the show. His enlightening and outstanding installation not only promoted a clear image of the

[1] See Grace Morley letter to William Wurster, January 15, 1938. SFMOMA Archives: ARCH.EXH.001, box 9, folder 23.

Bay Area as a coherent architectural region, but also set an exceedingly high design standard[2] for futures shows (Figure 1). In total, Born put on three major architectural exhibitions at SFMA with tremendous popular and critical success. The second was *Architecture Around San Francisco Bay* which, after an East Coast preview at the Architectural League[3] of New York, was mounted at SFMA in the spring of 1941 to take full take advantage of the AIA National Convention at nearby Yosemite National Park in May, securing the presence of Bay Region architects both inside and outside SFMA's halls around the time of the conference. Born's 1941 show would be a prewar mirror of his third 1949 exhibition *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region* (*DASFBR*), which became a pivotal moment in the American postwar debates on regionalism and modern architecture.

Morley close collaboration with Los Angeles's *California Arts & Architecture* and San Francisco's *Architect and Engineer* magazines, as well as her national connections, facilitated an extensive coverage of her Museum's exhibitions. In this regard, *Architectural Forum, Architectural Record* and the American Federation of Arts[4] *Magazine of Art* resulted instrumental in various systematically organised campaigns to promote "Bay" regionalism beginning soon after the launching of SFMA's own architecture exhibition programme. From 1938 to 1941, in a series of *Pencil Points* articles, noted architectural critic Talbot Hamlin (1938, p.346) applauded the 'sincere simplicity' of William Wurster and Gardner Dailey's residential designs. Likewise, Mumford's April 30, 1938, *Sky Line* piece praising the Bay Area's vigorous regional expressions indicates that, by then, Wurster was already on his radar screen. This promotion was reinforced by the August 1938 *Pencil Points* issue devoted to Wurster as the

[2] Local and national press remarked upon the architect's ground-breaking installation whose innovative design was without parallel in the United States. *Architectural Forum* (1938, p.468), for instance, laid emphasis on the simplicity and visual order accomplished by Born's refined proposal: '*a complete reversal of the usual practice of fitting together whatever material available might be*'.

[3] During this time in New York, from 1929 to 1936, Ernest Born joined the artistic staff of *Architectural Record* (1933-34), and then served on the editorial board of *Architectural Forum* up until his 1936 return to San Francisco. He was also prominent in some of the New York Architectural League's initiatives. As he became one of the most valuable assets of the Bay Area on the East Coast, Born most likely facilitated Bay Region architects' entrée to several League shows.

[4] During her directorship, Grace Morley maintained an active participation in several national and international museum associations and public cultural organisations, such as the American Federation of Arts, where she was elected Vice President.

titular head of the San Francisco Bay Region's "soft" modernism. Wurster's recognition also increased after his marriage to housing expert Catherine Bauer in 1940. Soon afterwards, a consistently maintained collaboration between *Life* magazine and *Architectural Forum* boosted his public notoriety. In 1944, Wurster was appointed Dean of Architecture at MIT which, along with Bauer and Morley's continuing contacts, secured his position on the boards of various architectural journals such as John Entenza's *California Arts & Architecture*, as well as his regular participation in architecture competitions, award juries and academic debates, where he exerted his influence[5]. Moreover, his collaborations with the ideologically diverse scholars he hired to lecture at MIT –from Robert Woods Kennedy to Henry-Russell Hitchcock– provided many opportunities for cultural exchange and East Coast exposure for the Bay Region.

The aforementioned 1941 AIA National Convention was a seminal event in the historiography of California modernism. Lewis Mumford's visit to San Francisco resulted in a personal tour with Wurster and Bauer from which emanated[6] his interest and later love for Bay Region architecture. Coincidentally, the following year, Mumford moved to the Bay Area to teach at Stanford University. There, a younger generation of local practitioners, such as Telesis members, recognised their fascination with Mumford's social criticism. In his turn, Mumford would interpret their work as an inspirational source to further elaborate his arguments defending an enduring tradition of the Bay Region School's organic responses to time and place.

Unlike Mumford's first sight appreciation of the region's architecture, Hitchcock's early opinion of Wurster was not very high. During the 1939-40 Golden Gate International Exhibition's run Hitchcock first visited California. Upon his return to the East Coast he wrote an essay on his findings being published in the December 1940 issue of Entenza's recently acquired magazine and in which the

[5] In the wake of Wurster's celebrity, a younger generation of San Francisco designers soon received increasingly growing media attention. Among them, Corbertt, DeMars, Dinwiddie, Funk and Kump became the most published names of American editors who, by the end of the 1940s, were fully aware that '*Bay Area architects were creating something out of the normal'* (Gebhard, 1976, p.7).

[6] Wurster's effort in showing Mumford around would challenge Marc Treib's suggestion that after Mumford's 1947 *New Yorker* piece, '*quite unknowingly and surprisingly*', Wurster found himself in the middle of a theoretical debate to reassess modernism's evaluation criteria (Treib, 1999, p.58).

Eastern critic continued his harsh post-International Style exhibition opinion of R. M. Schindler's experimental architecture. In this debatable article Hitchcock (1940, p.22) stated:

> Wurster's work, which has for some years been well publicized, is not exactly disappointing[7]. It is perhaps duller than one expects and the gradual development away from a simplified traditionalism toward more overtly modern, or at least original forms, seems either to have been arrested late or to have taken an unfortunate turning.

Contrary to Hitchcock, after his 1941-44 recognition of Northern California modernism, Mumford recurrently praised the environmental adaptation of Wurster's houses as particularly representative of the Bay Region tradition[8], which he identified with a '*free yet unobtrusive expression of the terrain, the climate and the life on the Coast*' (Mumford 1947, p.109).

Western architects-Eastern critics: discussions on regionalism and style

Lewis Mumford's October 11, 1947, *New Yorker Sky Line* column labelling San Francisco Bay Area domestic architecture as '*Bay Region style*' fuelled a national debate after he used the term to denounce what he considered the '*sterile and abstract*', '*one-sided interpretation of function*' of the International Style. Mumford's controversial "Status Quo" essay not only expressed his disaffection with the mechanical, formalist version of modernism proposed by Hitchcock and Johnson at MoMA in 1932, but also criticised their insistence on its legitimacy to evaluate contemporary architecture. Mumford believed that the International

[7] Even though Hitchcock's comments on other Northern California architects such as Dailey, Clark, Dinwiddie, Funk and McCarthy were more indulgent than his review of his future employer at MIT, the historian-critic clearly expressed his preference for Portland architects, such as Pietro Belluschi.

[8] Marc Treib had advocated that Northern California regionalism, as a re-examination of the locale, arose as an intrinsic theme during the New Deal years. Due to the scarcity of the Great Depression, locally sourced materials, such as wood, became the basis for cost-effective building solutions. Also, as an intersection of practical concerns and symbolic notions associated with the idea of home –so essential amid the stress and dislocation of the depression (Treib 43)–, its pervasive use resulted in the 'style' association with Wurster's second Bay Area tradition. Ironically, the prevalence of wood in the domestic imageries of San Francisco Bay, would be dismissively used by Alfred Barr against Lewis Mumford and William Wurster during the 1948 MoMA symposium, as later expounded upon.

Style principles, as inherited from European criticism, '*fostered a superficial attachment to the symbolism, rather than a deep understanding of the emancipatory possibilities of technology*' (Canizaro, 2005, p.288). Instead, he proposed "Bay" regionalism, from Bernard Maybeck to William Wurster, as a '*native and humane form of modernism*' (Mumford, 1947, p.109). Mumford's excerpt from *The Sky Line* provoked such an angry response from Philip Johnson's circles of the Eastern establishment that it prompted Johnson to host a symposium at MoMA to refute his criticism. The event took place on February 11, 1948, being alarmingly entitled "What is Happening to Modern Architecture?" (Figure 2).

Mumford's antagonists Alfred Barr and Henry-Russell Hitchcock opened the symposium by discrediting his misreading of the International Style. They profited from their position as introductory speakers to aggressively undermine Mumford's arguments and exploited the word "style" in their own interests. Barr dismissively dubbed Mumford's original '*Bay Region style*' as '*Cottage style*', intended a less serious, provincial version of the International Style. The term was also bandied about by other speakers who, as Barr, used it contemptuously to underline[9] that it was merely restricted to the field of domestic architecture. Furthermore, instead of focusing on the main cultural implications of Mumford's proposal, Barr and Hitchcock facilitated the views of subsequent panellists[10] and charted ancillary lines of discussion through related cotemporary debates concerning monumentality, functionalism and style, which ultimately diffused the argument's force and clarity, impeding Mumford's challenge from having '*the level of debate it deserved*' (Fenske, 1997, p.38).

The ensuing dispute between Mumford and Hitchcock over their dissimilar understanding of Bay Region "style" is representative of their two fundamentally opposed visions of modern architecture. Contrary to Hitchcock's analysis based on methods of connoisseurship and from the history of art he learned at Harvard (Searing, 1990), Mumford's interpretation of the architecture produced around

[9] Alfred Barr (1948, p.8) ironically uttered: '*It is significant, however, that when such a master of Cottage Style as William Wurster is faced with a problem of designing an office or a great project for the United Nations, he falls back upon a pretty orthodox version of the International Style*'.
[10] Walter Gropius, George Nelson, Marcel Breuer, Peter Blake and Frederick Gutheim, among others.

San Francisco Bay emerged from a wider conceptual frame considering the built environment as interdependent with its natural surroundings and its urban and socio-cultural context. Their '*impassioned confrontation*' at MoMA in 1948, as Gail Fenske (1997, p.37) observed, '*culminated a 20-year debate between the two historian-critics*' since Mumford could not accept Hitchcock's methodology of evaluating buildings on the basis of formal criteria, whereas Hitchcock was unable to appreciate Mumford's complex approach to architecture, which was deeply rooted in the ecological and social orientation of Patrick Geddes.

Figure 2. February 1948 MoMA Symposium. Mumford and Hitchcock are sat in the front row; Gropius at rostrum. (From *Architectural Record*'s March 1948 review of the event).

Fenske's thoughtful analysis of the 1948 symposium, however, overlooked Philip Johnson's role as the ongoing debate instigator. Peter Blake's autobiographical account *No Place Like Utopia* intimates that Johnson, who had taken Mumford's comments as an attack[11], orchestrated carefully the event at MoMA to refute

[11] Peter Blake who, after meeting Philip Johnson in 1947 was appointed Curator at MoMA's Department of Architecture and Design (1948-1950) would also admit in his autobiography that they were all wrong about Mumford (Blake, 1996, p.107).

Mumford's opinions in *The Sky Line*. Hitchcock's 1948 correspondence[12] with MoMA provides corroboration of Blake's statement. Similarly, the Breuer-Johnson communication during the planning of the symposium –discussing how to rebut '*Lewis Mumford's Isms* (sic)[13]'– also indicates that Johnson was stacking the deck against Mumford at the time MoMA was simultaneously preparing a retrospective of Breuer's work. Johnson's strategy to neutralise Mumford was twofold: first, he assigned his antagonist the role of moderator, which limited Mumford's possibilities of defending his arguments (Bletter & Ockman, 2015); secondly, upon arrival at MoMA, a number of Mumford's opponents[14] were given in advance Barr and Hitchcock's comments, evidencing Johnson's interest in controlling how the discussion could perhaps unfold[15].

After his return to MoMA, Johnson's change of mind regarding Bay Region architecture seems evident. In his "Architecture in 1941" piece, an unpublished article written in 1942, Johnson praised DeMars's Farm Security Administration wood complexes and mentioned favourably Wurster's large-scale housing project in Vallejo as an example of site prefabrication. Yet, in 1947, within the coast-to-coast saturation of Bay Region architecture's press coverage, Mumford's *New Yorker* piece must have been the straw that broke the proverbial camel's

[12] Philip Johnson letter to Henry-Russell Hitchcock, January 30, 1948. Henry-Russell Hitchcock Papers, 1919-1987. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (Johnson organised a first dinner before the symposium and a second one the following day, inviting Mumford, Barr and Hitchcock to discuss the terms of the meeting and its proceeding's publication).
[13] Marcel Breuer letter to Philip Johnson, December 30, 1947. Marcel Breuer Papers, 1920-1986. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
[14] Mary Barnes letter to Marcel Breuer, January 30, 1948. Marcel Breuer Papers, 1920-1986. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.
[15] Blake's correspondence and discussion with Hitchcock about Johnson's and Blake's October 1948 article in *Magazine of Art* rebutting Robert Woods Kennedy's earlier piece on New England regionalism would further evidence their collusion in the February Symposium at MoMA. Their article continued the 'Cottage' versus 'International Style' debates resumed at every occasion from the symposium through 1949. See Peter Blake letter to Henry-Russell Hitchcock, October 14, 1948. Henry-Russell Hitchcock Papers, 1919-1987. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

back and therefore perceived by Johnson[16] as a threat to his new programmes at MoMA[17].

San Francisco Bay's '*romantic blend of natural beauty and cultural legitimacy*', (Serriano, 2006, p.94) was identified by Mumford's followers as a sort of oasis of national values. Conversely, to his adversaries[18], the 'Bay Region style' was merely an instrumental myth to express their overly provincial discomfort with the growing presence of foreign architecture in the United States. To compound matters, despite the fact that the national recognition of Bay Region architecture was by then firmly established by articles and exhibitions, its acceptance as an articulated phenomenon was questioned by both its detractors and supporters, including its practitioners. In fact, having reached no conclusion, the 1948 meeting at MoMA had the dichotomous effect of pigeonholing San Francisco Bay architects into a 'Bay Region style' of which none of its protagonists agreed[19] they were consciously a part. Thus, the main battle lines had apparently been drawn following the 1948 symposium and the dispute between enthusiasts and opponents of Mumford's arguments played themselves out on the pages of the most reputed architectural journals of the country. For instance, in the April 1948 post-symposium issue of P*rogressive Architecture* Thomas Creighton published an editorial under the form of a letter to Philip Johnson expressing his support of Mumford's viewpoint. Correspondingly, in December, 1948, Creighton published a highly Wurster-sympathetic editorial essay entitled "Architecture:

[16] The 1947 Princeton symposium "Building for Modern Man", which was attended by Johnson himself and counted on many of the same participants he invited to MoMA the following year, might have provided the inspiration for his "What is Happening to Modern Architecture?" discussion at MoMA.

[17] Lewis Mumford's 1947 article was published just a few weeks after the opening of Johnson's *Mies van der Rohe* exhibit at MoMA in September.

[18] After the 1948 symposium, Harvard GSD Bulletin prompted to write a report of the event under the sarcastic title "What has Happened to Lewis Mumford?". The article, which was biased against Mumford's '*attack on the modernist*' reveals the divergent stances on the issue taken by the two faculties in Cambridge. Whereas MIT backed its Dean Wurster, Harvard adopted MoMA's position, which was summarised in the GSD review.

[19]When the following year nine Bay Region architects were asked by *Architectural Record* West Coast editor Elizabeth K. Thompson whether there was a regional style in Northern California, the interviewed authors responded evasively or answered no to the question. Still, Thompson's "Is there a Bay Area Style?" *Architectural Record* article published in its May 1949 issue demonstrated that, implicitly, to what most of them agreed was about the existence of a common ground regarding their understanding of a shared culture of place. Later, Thompson herself would explain the result of her survey by avowing that the individualism of the West Coast architects justifiably rebelled against such a restrictive label (Thompson 1951).

Not Style" which resulted in incendiary responses speaking volumes about how aggressively and differently the interpretations of Mumford's hot topic were received.

Mumford, Hitchcock and the landmark 1949 show on "Bay" regionalism

Early in 1949, making the most[20] of the stir caused by the previous year's symposium, a group of Bay Region architects, led by Ernest Born and some reputed editors, agreed to collaborate on the organisation and promotion of a new major exhibition, tellingly named *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region*. The show, which was almost exclusively devoted to single family residences built after the war[21], garnered the support of the two local AIA chapters and was on display at SFMA from September 16 through November 6, 1949. The installation design was once more entrusted to Born, who provided the exhibition with his accustomed conceptual clarity and expressive dynamism (Figure 3).

[20] Contrary to Pierluigi Serraino's (2006, p.70) statement that both the label '*Bay Region style*' and the arguments of its cultural legitimacy were invented on the East Coast, and the controversy only reached California in 1949, two years after the dispute had '*snowballed from a passing comment in a weekly publication to become the subject of a debate of national proportions*', it must be recalled that Bay Region architects provided the controversial conditions that echoed as far as the London *Architectural Review*, which in its October 1948 issue openly endorsed Mumford's stance. The 1949 show was thus anything all but a delayed response to Mumford's 1947 piece.

[21] The original exhibition, as shown at SFMA, included 52 houses by 35 architects. The average age of the architects participating in the show was 40 years and only one of them was a woman, Helen Douglass. About half of the houses shown in 1949 were designed by architects who had begun practicing after returning from the front very shortly after the war.

Figure 3. *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region*'s installation at SFMA. (Courtesy of SFMOMA archives).

Upon the commotion caused by Mumford's article and subsequent public debates, unlike the 1938 and 1941 shows, in 1949, SFMA did not want to miss the opportunity of publishing an exhibition catalogue (Figure 4). It featured seven essays validating the existence of a modern school in the Bay Region and providing evidence for its consistency as a unique regional tradition dating as far back as the work of California pioneers such as Bernard Maybeck, Ernest Coxhead, Greene & Greene, Julia Morgan, John Galen Howard, etc. Richard Freeman[22] prefaced the book highlighting the leitmotif of the catalogue: Bay Region architects were winning international recognition for '*the imaginative way in which they had met the problems of site, climate, materials and client requirements*', being the reason why their houses monopolised the pages of every regional and national architectural magazine.

[22] Executive director Richard Freeman was at the helm of the San Francisco Museum of Art during Grace Morely's 1947-1949 leave of absence in Paris to work for UNESCO.

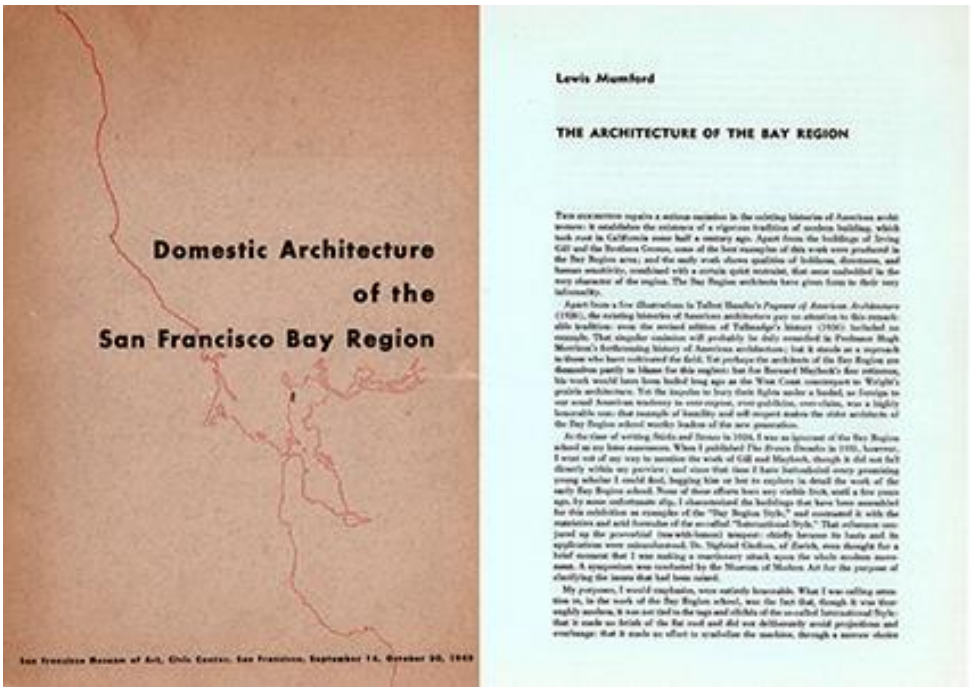

Figure 4. E. Born's cover of 1949 *DASFBR* exhibition catalogue (left) and L. Mumford's essay first page (right).

Lewis Mumford's "The Architecture of the Bay Region" was certainly the catalogue's most significant contribution. In this second essay Mumford reframed and clarified the ideas he put across in his 1947 *New Yorker* column. Also reemphasising his discourse[23] at the MoMA symposium, he celebrated the individualism of West Coast architects affirming that their common ground was their sensitivity towards the environment which, again, he opposed to the '*restricted and arid formulas of the so-called International Style'*. Mumford called upon historians and critics for proper study and recognition of what he more accurately renamed as '*Bay Region School*', an all-inclusive designation rectifying his former use of the word "style", which he lamented as an '*unfortunate slip*'. Quintessentially Mumford's, his contribution revealed the work of the lucid and progressive thinker he was:

[23] By the time Mumford was invited to contribute an essay to the exhibition catalogue, in an article published in *Architectural Review* he insisted that the '*restrictive definition of modern architecture*' emerging from the 1932 show was '*still maintained*' by Philip Johnson's MoMA in 1948 (Mumford 1949b, p.174).

> They main problem of architecture today is to reconcile the universal and the regional, the mechanical and the human, the cosmopolitan and the indigenous. […] Bay Region both belongs to the region and transcends the region: it embraces the machine and it transcends the machine. It does not ignore particular needs, customs, conditions, but translates them into the common form of our civilization (Mumford, 1949a).

William Wurster also contributed an evocative essay, "A Personal View", in which he recalled the virtues of the informal California lifestyle, the freedom, audaciousness and the pleasure felt in the anonymous Bay Area houses.

Architectural Record West Coast editor Elizabeth Thompson, whose participation in the catalogue explored the historical roots of the Bay Region School, was the brains behind the exhibition's national publicity campaign. The intense editorial activity performed by Thomson during the organization of the show speaks volumes about her magazine's promotional effort to take advantage[24] of the debates following MoMA's 1948 symposium. Coupling Thompson's promotion with *DASFBR*'s production, *Architectural Record* released several pieces documenting the show. First, the May 1949 issue; then, in September, perfectly timed to coincide with its opening, an exhibition[25] guide and a richly illustrated presentation of the show for which Born himself designed the layout. Finally, *Architectural Record* along with *Architectural Forum* and *Life* magazine, published different monographs on individual houses included in the exhibition. Paradoxically, *Arts & Architecture*, which until then had been actively supporting some of the most significant SFMA's activities deliberately did not mention the 1949 event[26].

[24] The earliest correspondence concerning *DASFBR* kept in the SFMOMA archives is dated March 2, 1949. Six months prior to its opening in September, Thompson had published the aforementioned "Is There a Bay Region Style?" spread in the May of 1949 issue of *Architectural Record*.
[25] The magazine also offered its Western Section readers a four-page hand guide and a map locating the houses in the exhibition. These two *Architectural Record* supplements were used strategically to enhance the publicity of *DASFBR*, and sent to every venue as part of the exhibition documentation.
[26] Instead, Entenza preferred to publish an Edgar Kaufmann's article revealingly named "What is Happening to Modern Architecture?" which tried a compromising formula.

A smaller version[27] of *DASFBR* was produced as a touring exhibition. It was circulated by the American Federation of Arts (AFA) and, from February, 1950, to July, 1951, visited twelve venues in America before travelling to Germany. Archive records reveal that both Leslie Cheek[28] and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, in charge respectively of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Smith College, showed an avid interest in the show, wanting to obtain it from the very moment its availability was announced. Hitchcock's correspondence[29] during the Smith College Art Museum venue exposes some of his ideas concerning the show. For instance, that Wurster had evolved moving away gradually from previous restraints. However, Hitchcock also spoke contemptuously about San Francisco's taste and expressed his doubts about the exhibition catalogue '*inadequacies*'. Also revealing of his undecided judgement is that the following year he included Bay Area architecture in his course lessons.

MoMA-SFMA exchanges and the ensuing East Coast reactions

In 1949, *DASFBR* coincided with the culmination of nearly a decade of cooperation between the country's two main museums, being primarily the result of a crescendo of interlocked advertising and publicity of Northern California which had the effect of establishing for the Bay Region a room in the pantheon of architectural history.

Grace Morley's prominent role in the AFA as well as her lobbying effort to secure a Western circuit for shows coming from the East primarily resulted in a close collaboration with MoMA, beginning as early as 1937. Morley's close relationship with Alfred Barr, and later with Elizabeth Mock via her sister Catherine Bauer and brother-in law William Wurster, facilitated that a number of noteworthy

[27] For the travelling exhibition, the original 52 entries of the contemporary section were reduced to 16 houses.
[28] Leslie Cheek letter to the American Federation of Arts, July 19, 1949. VMFA records. The Library of Virginia archives. Cheek, who was close to Grace Morley, Lewis Mumford and Frank Lloyd Wright, wrote an article for the Museum Bulletin insisting on the uniqueness of the architectural production of the Bay Area as very different from the rest of the country.
[29] Henry-Russell Hitchcock letter to Robert J. Duemling, April 21, 1950. In this letter he offers his viewpoint on the show. Referring to the Greene & Greene house in Berkeley exhibited on the historical section of the 1949 show, the critic considered that the brothers were quintessentially Bay Region architects regardless of their practice and office being based in Southern California.

circulating exhibitions borrowed from MoMA fit naturally into her architectural programmes. Mock's correspondence[30] reveals that she was collaborating with her sister Catherine and Grace Morley at least since her arrival at MoMA in 1938. The circulation of exhibitions between the two museums during Mock's curatorship produced a cultural exchange of progressive ideas regarding modern planning, public housing, wartime emergences and, of course, the regionalist standpoint[31].

After Bauer's 1940 wedding to Wurster, the sisters' correspondence gives documentary evidence of Elizabeth Mock's frequent professional and personal travels to California in 1940 and 1941. Upon her return from the Bay Area, armed with fresh perspective, she organised *American Architecture*, *Regional Building in America* and *The Wooden House in America*, three regionalist-slanted shows where Bay Region architects figured prominently.

This period[32] is representative of MoMA's socio-political change of direction to embrace a broader regionalist standpoint. Between 1942 and Mock's departure[33] late in 1946, MoMA's exhibitions had the largest audiences in both Coasts to date. They focused on American domestic architecture, presenting related topics through the approaches in which the public was most interested. Her Wurster-Mumford well-informed regionalist slant was thus ideological but also the result of financial reasoning due to MoMA's concerns in reaching wider audiences. From this perspective, it is enlightening to compare the coverage of Bay regionalism in the most significant MoMA-produced exhibitions encompassing the 1949 SFMA

[30] See Catherine Bauer Wurster Papers: series 1, subseries 1.2, correspondence 1921-1964: box 1, folders 8-10 (Catherine Bauer to Elizabeth Mock and vice versa). The Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley.

[31] Mock's main exhibitions travelling to San Francisco –such as *Wartime Housing* (1942); *Look at Your Neighborhood: Principles of Neighborhood Planning* (1944) or *If You Want to Build a House* (1946)– are expressive of her social concerns. MoMA received the influence of California exhibitors and even their exhibitions, like the 1942 *Western Living* show, which travelled to MoMA under the form and title of *Five California Houses*, indicating of the cross-pollination between both museums.

[32] From September, 1937, to July, 1946, MoMA's Department of Architecture was headed by curator John McAndrew, and later by his former collaborator Elizabeth Mock after his resignation in 1941.

[33] Lefaivre and Tzonis (2012, p.120) have assumed Franz Schulze's 1994 account that, in 1946, Johnson eliminated Elizabeth Mock upon his return to MoMA to reclaim his former position. However, according to Jennifer Tobias, there are other versions of Mock's departure, such as Mock's own one as she declared it was her choice to join her husband architect Rudolph Mock in Tennessee, where he worked for the Tennessee Valley Authority (Tobias 2003, p.33-34).

show during and after Mock's curatorship: *Built in USA: 1932-1944* (1944) and *Built in USA: Post-war Architecture* (1953).

Elizabeth Mock's discourse was detailed in her major show *Built in USA: 1932-1944*. Although Mock aimed to educate the public in the acceptance of a wide range of different interpretations of modernism, she particularly stressed the importance of Northern California[34] contributions, which due to her sister's guidance were presented through cases of affordable homes for working families, urban facilities and rural community planning projects by William Wurster, Vernon DeMars and Garret Eckbo, evidencing at MoMA the utmost concern[35] of the Bay Region School. Anticipating Mumford's arguments and stressing the ideas put forward in one of her most popular exhibitions, *Regional Building in America* (1941), Mock's introduction to *Built in USA*'s accompanying catalogue[36] stressed that, since 1932, American architecture had learned to adapt the modernist idiom with local materials, the free forms of nature and the appropriate floor plans, volumes and building solutions for living in the different climates of the country. All but coincidentally, she illustrated her point with Wurster's work as an example of a practice '*based on good sense and the California wood tradition rather than on specific theories of design*' (Mock, 1944, p.14).

Built in USA: Post-war Architecture was curated by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Arthur Drexler under Philip Johnson's tutelage. Unlike Mock's homonymous exhibition, the second *Built in USA* focused more on corporate buildings and the private residence than on urban planning and public housing. Its domestic section deliberately turned its back on "Bay" regionalism, which was reduced to a couple of minor examples. William Wurster was not present in this exhibition. Instead, Harwell Harris's personal tribute to Greene and Greene was the only

[34] The work of Bay Region architects –including Corbett, Dailey, DeMars, Funk, Kump and Wurster– was perceptibly well-covered.
[35] As none of the admirable works of these Bay Region architects in the field of social housing were included in *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region*, it seems evident that the interest of the 1949 show was a discussion on identity that ultimately folded upon architectural language.
[36] Significantly, John Funk's indisputably Bay Region Heckendorf House (Modesto, CA, 1939) illustrated the cover of her 1944 *Built in USA* exhibition catalogue.

representation of Western regionalism, being California modernism mostly summarised through the industrial paradigm of the Case Study House Program.

After a decade-long series of events devoted to introduce MoMA's audiences to regional planning and building, Johnson's triumphal preface intimated that there was no other possible architectural present in America but an evolution from the International Style. He based his arguments on Hitchcock's analysis and twofold selection criteria: quality and significance of the moment. Oddly, Wurster was not even mentioned in the catalogue despite being one of the authors most clearly identified with the major architectural debates of the time. As a first deduction, this fact could be considered a logical consequence of Johnson's interest in securing his viewpoint. However, the question seems far more complicated. During the preparation of *Built in USA: Post-war Architecture,* Hitchcock's relation with both Catherine and William Wurster was very fluent, if not familiar as their 1951-1952 correspondence[37] proves. Wurster most likely declined to participate in the show as he was devoted to the task of organising UC Berkeley Architecture School –for which he commissioned Hitchcock a report on its Library. Besides, the majority of the members of the exhibition advisory committee were sympathetic to Wurster, such as Creighton, Hamlin and Mock. Wurster's MIT faculty members Vernon DeMars, Carl Koch, and Robert Woods Kennedy had a project in the show; Aalto's Baker House commissioned under Wurster's MIT tenure was included; and his successor Pietro Belluschi had his work conspicuously exhibited. Notwithstanding his absence from the catalogue, as a figure of national stature and influence, Wurster's fingerprints were all over the second *Built in USA* show.

Always less polemical than Johnson or Barr, Hitchcock's consideration of Wurster and his fellow Bay Region architects was problematic. Due to his strict formal criteria he always had serious reservations about the domestic tradition of San Francisco Bay. Yet, Hitchcock's interest in obtaining the exhibition at Smith

[37] Hitchcock informed Bauer and Wurster about his new '*association*' with Philip Johnson to '*get together a new Built in USA exhibition and publication'*. Although there is no invitation to Wurster to submit materials to the exhibit, the critic spoke frankly about it. See Henry-Russell Hitchcock letter to Catherine B. and William W. Wurster, June 6, 1952. Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley. Catherine Bauer Papers. BANC.MSS 74/163c: Series 2. Subseries 2.2. Box 19, folder 13.

College signalled his curiosity about its contributions. Indeed, except for the occasions in which the critic collaborated closely with Johnson, Hitchcock's stance vis-à-vis Wurster was ambivalent.

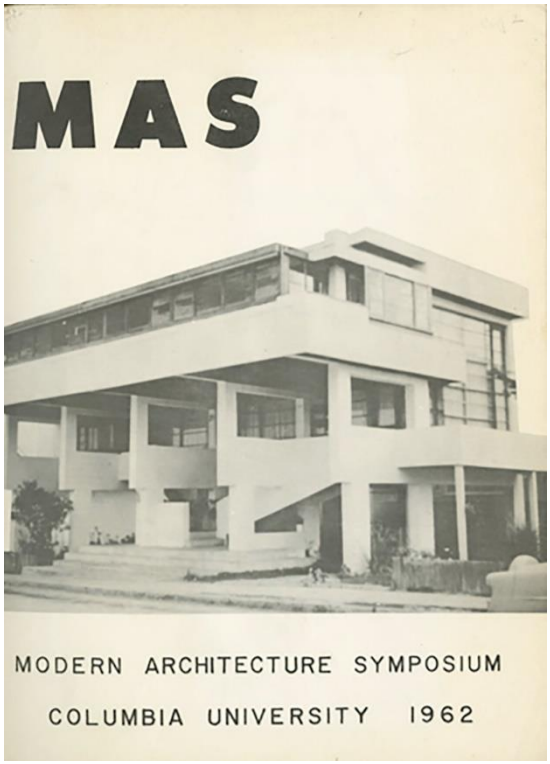

Figure 5. Photo of R. M. Schindler's Lovell Beach House on the cover of the first edition of MAS at Columbia.

One can only wonder the extent to which the two Bauer sisters influenced Hitchcock's vision of California. They planted seeds for the production of *In the Nature of Materials, 1887-1941: The Buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright* in conjunction with the 1940-41 MoMA exhibition on Wright. Bauer had collaborated with Hitchcock and Mumford in the 1932 MoMA show and again on the 1937 *Modern Architecture in England* book and exhibition. Hitchcock's inevitable mellowing as the impact of the International Style faded is evident in his 1951 *Architectural Record* article "The International Style Twenty Years After" accepting Wurster's architecture. It predicted Hitchcock's continuum referencing to the death of the International Style in his 1965 introduction to the 1966 edition of *International Style*, as well as his apologetic introduction to

David Gerhard's 1971 survey on *Schindler*. Correspondingly, Hitchcock's chairing the series of three Modern Architecture Symposia at Columbia University in the 1960s was another attempt to reassess the American reception of European modernism, being its 1962 MAS cover featuring Schindler's Lovell Beach House (Figure 5) a sort of personal *mea culpa* aiming to repair one of his most egregious mistakes at interpreting California architecture.

Conclusions

The circumstances and decisions behind the organisation of the 1949 exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art, as well as of its strategically planned venues reveal that this exhibition was part of a well-orchestrated campaign that had begun around a decade before Lewis Mumford wrote his renowned 1947 *New Yorker* piece causing the ideological controversy on the existence of "Bay" regionalism as an alternative to the International Style. Previous displays in San Francisco prove that *Domestic Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Region* was not an isolated event. Rather, it was another milestone in the series of promotional actions that, under the directorship of Grace Morley, had been developed by active groups of local architects counting on the support of SFMA's circles and channels, such as the American Federation of Arts, the AIA and several editorial hubs that sponsored the cause of Bay Region architecture throughout the country years before regionalism became a nexus of national debates. Leading Eastern architects, scholars and editors' early experience to Bay Region architecture through William Wurster, Catherine Bauer, Ernest Born and their Bay Region colleagues, as well as the continuum of 1940s SFMA-MoMA collaboration, and their New York Architectural League alliances, approximately coincided with Mumford teaching at Stanford, with Hitchcock's waning enthusiasm for the International Style as he gained appreciation for Wright's work, and with the rise and fall of the curatorship of Elizabeth Mock assisted by her sister's connections. All these situations and exchanges would coalesce into Mumford's recognition, observation and support of a distinctive Bay Region understanding of architecture.

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We are indebted to Peggy Tran-Le, archivist and records manager at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, who has provided a great deal of assistance to our research. We are also grateful to Henriette Kets de Vries, manager of the Cunningham Center for Prints, Drawings and Photographs at the Smith College Museum of Art, and to Courtney Tkacz, archivist at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. All of them have facilitated our investigation by guiding us through the extraordinary archives of their museums. This chapter has also benefited from the help of Jennifer Tobias, librarian at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, whose comments on Elizabeth Mock have been of the greatest importance to us.

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AN AMERICAN 'PARTHENON'
Walter Gropius's Athens US Embassy Building between Regionalism, International Style and National Identities

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Abstract

In 1954 the United States, embarked on an embassy-building program that sought to represent its expansive foreign policy by means of a bold embrace of modernist architecture. For this purpose, the Foreign Buildings Office issued a set of new guidelines asking architects to present designs for buildings that would be modern, open to the local traditions of the host country and American at the same time. Walter Gropius's The Architects Collaborative was among the architectural firms that managed to obtain such a commission for the US embassy in Athens, Greece. The designs were officially presented in 1957 (the building was inaugurated in 1961) and were supposed to achieve a balance between a regionalist sensitivity, a dedication to the principles of Modern architecture and the United States' national claims. Gropius predictably underlined Parthenon as the source of his inspiration and resorted to an extensive use of 'classical' Greek marble which was combined with standard modernist techniques and materials. But how could an International Style stand at the same time as national and open to regionalist loans from the Greek classical and vernacular tradition? This paper examines the Athens embassy building as a watered-down intersection between regionalism and modern architecture, a kind of populist modernism which prefigured or were typical of a crisis of both regionalism and modernism. The regionalist/classical connotations of the building are framed in a postcolonial context which casts a new light on this controversial attempt towards a new type of International Style.

Keywords: Gropius; International Style; Modernism; Regionalism; Colonialism

'*On a sloping site about a mile from the Parthenon stands the new U. S. Embassy. It is a symbol of one relatively young democracy at the fountainhead of many old democratic and architectural traditions*': With these were words began a 1961 article in the *Architectural Forum* presenting to the American public the recently inaugurated US embassy in Athens by Walter Gropius's The Architects Collaborative (TAC) (Architectural Forum, 1961, 120). In the peak of the Cold War, the reference to the Parthenon served to convey the idea that the

United States represented a modern form of democracy, the rightful successor of the ancient Greek democratic spirit which was of course juxtaposed to the Soviet totalitarian system. The building was part of a broader embassy-building program of the United States government that sought to represent its expansive foreign policy by means of an ambitious embrace of modernist architecture. The program began in the 1930s, but it was radically reorganized in 1954, when, for the first time, the State Department appointed an architectural advisory committee to review all designs for the Office of Foreign Buildings Operations (FBO). The representational pressure was great as the FBO and its new committee sought the ideal form of an architecture that would exhibit abroad an idealized self-image of the American national identity. To this end, it issued a set of new guidelines asking architects to submit designs that would '*represent American architecture abroad and adapt themselves to local conditions and cultures so deftly that they are welcomed, not criticized, by their hosts*.' (Architectural Record, 1956, 161).

Walter Gropius's The Architects Collaborative was among the architectural firms that managed to obtain such a commission for the US embassy in Athens, Greece. It was a direct assignment, without a design competition having been announced for it. The designs were officially presented in 1957 (the building was inaugurated in 1961) and were supposed to propose a version of an Americanised Modernism that would balance the principles of the so-called International Style with a regionalist sensitivity. Framing the regionalist/classical connotations of the building in a postcolonial context, this paper seeks to reassess this controversial attempt towards a new type of International Style fit for the developing world.

The site selected for the US embassy was in a relatively undeveloped at the time area, close but beyond the limits of the city centre; the area was previously occupied by military barracks and it was also situated at a close distance from housing estates and informal settlements. The side streets of the embassy site were not paved and unlit with the local city council only dealing with these problems shortly before the inauguration of the building after pressures from

Gropius and the embassy staff, who wanted to further underscore its modern character.

The embassy's design is a three-storey square building with an atrium occupying the central space. Apart from its glass façade, protected in the ground floor level by a perforated blue ceramic curtain, what immediately draws attention is the exterior concrete colonnade (clad with Greek marble) which support horizontal beams from the two upper floors of the building. These crossbeams are suspended by steel hangers. The extended roof is insulated so as to protect the interior from the sun rays. (Figure 1).

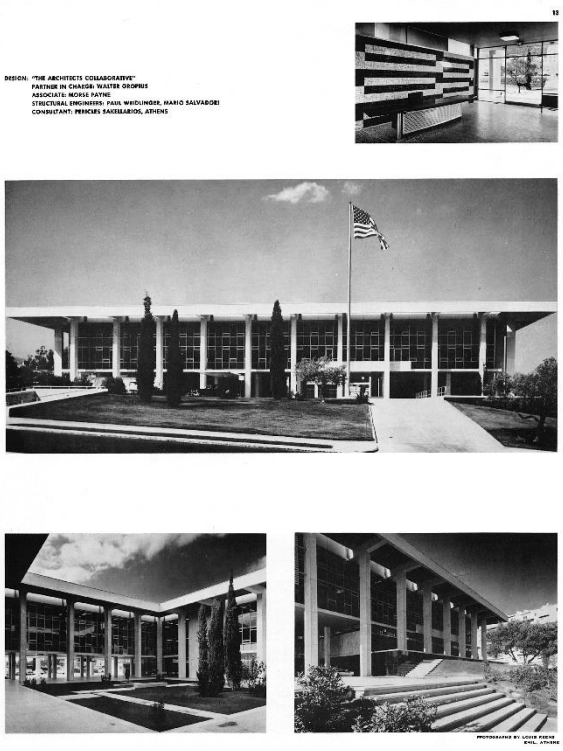

Figure 1. Louis Reens and Emil, US Embassy in Athens, 1957-1961. Source: *Art and Architecture*, 79(5), 1962.

For the proposed design, Gropius worked primarily with H. Morse Payne, Jr. of The Architects Collaborative and the Greek architect Pericles Sakellarios (a promoter of a regionalist modernism in Greece). A previous design by Ralph

Rapson and John van der Meulen had been abandoned due to changes in the FBO administration and the commission was given to Gropius's team. This caused a controversy as Rapson later complained that Gropius, who had asked to consult his design, had copied his idea. In any case, Rapson's design is closer to the International Style – that the FBO now wanted to avoid – as it lacks Gropius's classicist references. (Figures 2-3).

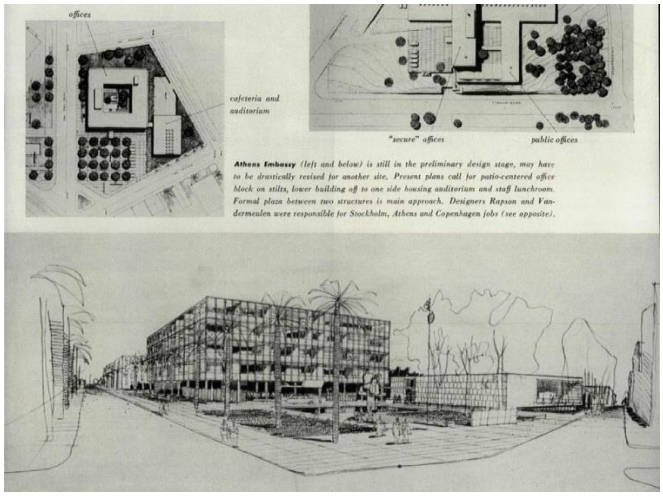

Figure 2. Ralph Rapson and John van der Meulen design and sketch for the US Athens Embassy building (never materialized). Source: *Architectural Forum*, 98(3), 1953.

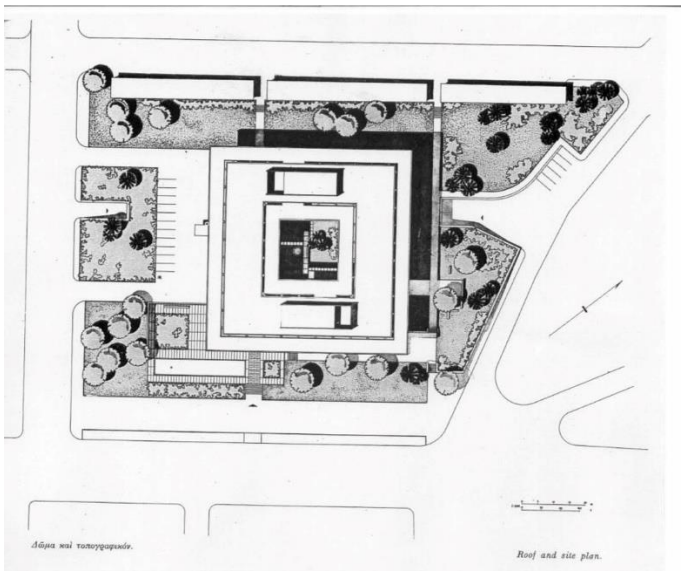

Figure 3. Walter Gropius, Design for the US Athens Embassy. Source: *Architektoniki* 1(6), 1957.

Pericles Sakellarios's contribution to the design is neglected. It is certain that the Greek architect did not simply function as the project's architectural supervisor in Athens. William Hughes, FBO's director, described the Greek architect as the proper person for the supervision 'because of his prominence in local affairs and because of his association with [Gropius] in the planning phases of the project,' whilst Gropius, offering the position to Sakellarios, referred to the Greek architect's 'invaluable help and support […] in starting this job.'[1] It seems that Gropius had hired Sakellarios after a negative feedback from FBO's Architectural Advisory Committee to his initial design which had found his plan '*complicated and confused*,' and the whole building '*colossal, raw-boned, and forbidding*,' concluding that '*it reminded no one of the plan of the Parthenon or any other Greek landmark*.' (Loeffler, 1998, 150). Indeed, in the early design, the characteristic overhangs of later plans are absent with the whole construction appearing rather static and monumental. TAC's and Sakellarios's response to FBO's criticism was the moderation of the building's modernist elements through the underscoring of an abstract, sophisticated classicism which points more clearly to the ancient Greek past. According to Gropius, TAC's intention '*was to find the spirit of the Greek approach without imitating any classical means*.' However, the somewhat too obvious references to standard classical means – the colonnade, the arrangement of space imitating that of an ancient Greek temple and the extensive use of the material par excellence of classical art, Greek marble, mark a distinct and purposed deviation from the tenets of the so-called International Style.

It was no surprise that the FBO directly commissioned Gropius for this high-profile project, since Gropius's recent regionalist and environmentalist claims were in keeping with the reformed FBO embassy-building program along the line of a hybrid modernist/regionalist style. (Berdini, 1984, 182). And of course, we should bear in mind that, in parallel with the Athens Embassy building, Gropius and his team worked for the designs of the University of Baghdad project. Pivotal in the adaptation of the State Department's ambitions to this hybrid style was

[1] See letter of William P. Hughes to Gropius, 3.3.1959, and letter of Gropius to Pericles Sakellarios, 9.3.1959.

the contribution of architect Pietro Belluschi, an advocate of regionalism in the US. In 1954 Belluschi, Dean of the MIT School of Architecture and Planning, had been appointed head of the FBO's advisory architectural committee which assessed Gropius's design (at the same time the two architects were collaborating in the designs of the ill-fated gigantic real estate development project Back Bay Center in Boston). The next year Belluschi published an article in the *Architectural Record* stressing the importance of local architectural traditions as a source of inspiration for the new FBO program. His article resulted after an FBO-funded travel to developing countries with the purpose of studying local architectural traditions for future embassy buildings. Belluschi's critique was not original; it followed a long tradition of a critical stance towards modernity on the basis of the dichotomy of culture versus civilization, organic unity versus chaos. Citing the explosion of modern media and transportation as the cause of 'losing touch' with the local environment and the gradual deprivation of direct, non-mediated emotions, Belluschi commented: '*Our elegant magazines will sell pretty pictures to entice people in Main or Florida or Oregon or Pakistan. Under those conditions it is difficult to achieve convincing and heartfelt unity*.' (Belluschi, 1955, 138). An attentive reader, however, cannot miss the irony; for by naively illustrating his article with photos from societies where this organic unity supposedly remained undisrupted, Belluschi in reality sold to the American public exotic and primitivist pictures of a present that was rapidly becoming a past due, in large part, to the American foreign intervention that was radically transforming those very same societies. Inother words, as Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi remark, '*modern architecture, when it took up some notion of local heritage, could represent itself as the healing praxis for that which it had injured*.' (Isenstadt & Rizvi, 2008, 20). Or, in Ron Robin's analysis, Belluschi praised local construction practice merely as 'customs' which as such were perceived '*unchanging, stagnant, and, by implication, inferior*' as opposed to the freely developed, supposedly undogmatic (equally open to the past and the future) American modernism (Robin, 1992, 150). In the final analysis, this logic relegated '*native elements to the level of decorations for buildings based on uniquely American "new techniques or new materials".*' (Robin, 150).

It is clear, then, that the FBO was primarily concerned about the symbolic aspect of this newfound regionalist sensitivity; its overall program represented an architectural iconography of gesture or an architecture of proclamation. This is evident in two of its fundamental instructions: that the buildings should express 'American democracy' but also consider the historical past and significance of each area. What was demanded, in other words, was a propagandist (hence superficial) version of modern regionalism that would adhere to the orthodox historical narratives of the US and each one of the host countries.

It is from this standpoint that we should make sense of Gropius's great care in adapting his post-war principles of total architecture to the demands and diplomatic ambitions of the American government for this specific project; thus, presenting his designs for the Athens embassy he stressed that:

> architecture begins beyond the fulfilment of practical problems […] and must manifest a psychological quality or attitude symbolizing its purpose. […] Our aim was […] a building which should appear serene, peaceful and inviting, mirroring the […] political attitude of the United States. Also, the design should abide by the classical 'spiritus loci' […] but in contemporary […] terms. (Gropius, 1957, p. 161)

The correspondence between Gropius and Sakellarios shows that this classical tradition was not understood by the embassy staff or, even if it had, its translation into the design was not always welcome. The Ambassador, for instance, constantly pressed upon U. S. bureaucrats to impose changes in the design such as getting rid of the patio – a 'wasted space' as he called it – in order to make more space for offices.[2]

But this correspondence also points to another interesting fact: that in their attempt to conform to an abstract idea of classicism, function followed form; in this reversal of Gropius's Bauhaus principles, the material – in our case the Greek marble – could not easily adapt to the awkward version of the embassy's regionalist modernism: part of the black marble used for the interior soon faded

[2] See letter of Sakellarios to Gropius of 4.4.1961. The issue of "wasted space" is also discussed in the letters of Sakellarios to Gropius of 14.10.1960, 17.12.1960, 8.2.1961 as well as in Gropius's reply of 14.12.1961.

from the effect of the sun with its more exposed pieces cracking at their weakest points due to the extreme heat.[3]

Time and again the American press highlighted the Athens embassy as a successful combination of a 'neoclassic expressive freedom' which in essence constituted a new rendition of the International Style – a moderate, watered down modernism to be exported to the developing countries that the US wished to pull within its sphere of influence. Pivotal to this 'moderate modernism' was the adoption of formal elements alluding to the regional architecture or, more broadly, to a historicist style which had been instrumental in imagining the nation where it did not exist.

The intention of the American government and the architects of the Embassy to 'offer' to the city of Athens a building that would be exemplarily modern, whilst, at the same time, would allude and even underline Greece's classical heritage, can be fully understood if seen through the colonialist rhetoric of Philhellenism. As Stathis Gourgouris has brilliantly observed, this '*Philhellenism in name was in reality anti-Hellenism*', for it adored an '*imaginary*,' '*non-existent'* Greece, hence constructing an ideal image of Greek culture against which modern Greek social life was routinely measured. (Gourgouris, 2012, 182-183). As a result, this 'production of Greece as a colonized ideal' presented contemporary Greeks as the exotic, oriental other who was eternally bound to the land of classic art and democracy but who also was – as an oriental subject – an alien to her or his own land. It was the civilized West, then, this narrative went on, that saved and revamped the classical heritage at an age when the Greeks had lost contact with it. And as this heritage was the foundation of Renaissance and Modernity – from which the West saw Greece being shut off for centuries – both the modern and the classical could only be imported to contemporary Greece.

And in fact, neoclassicism itself had been imported to Greece, right after the foundation of the modern Greek state in 1830, as a symbol of westernization and modernization of the new country. As Neni Panourgiá observes: *'Neoclassicism becomes the language of modern architecture, and architecture*

[3] Letter of Sakellarios to Gropius, 10.8.1961.

becomes the language of the modern state. [...] Greece wants to be a modern nation in the language of neoclassicism'. (Panourgiá, 2004, 174). Now Modern Architecture – especially Le Corbusier's School and the German Neues Bauen – was imported to Greece in the 1920s during an intense period of national-liberal reforms. The principal target of those reforms was the westernization of the 'oriental' territories which had been recently acquired by the Greek state after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, architecture, the so-called International Style this time, came to symbolize the modernization of the reorganized national space.

But if Athenians were more or less familiarized with the Modern Movement, the question to be asked is: how was Gropius's peculiar classicist modernism received in Greece? Was it found too modern? Did the public grasp the intended allusion to the Parthenon and the city's classical heritage? Reginald R. Isaacs comments that Gropius had found 'very attractive' the steel and concrete building, that is before its ornamentation with Greek marble, and that '*he knew very well that the Greeks would consider it an insult to leave exposed in plain view the concrete surfaces*.' (Isaacs, 1984, 1034). Isaac's view is misleading, not only because Gropius liked the finished Greek marble columns (as his letters to Sakellarios attest), but primarily due to its neglect of nearly four decades of Modern Movement Architecture in the Greek capital which makes implausible that the citizens of Athens would be scandalized by the embassy's restrained modernism. Jane Loeffler's comment on the US embassy in Rio de Janeiro can be verbatim adopted as regards the one in Athens, since the latter could also hardly be described '*as a uniquely American expression, when the modern movement had already arrived in [Athens] and did not need an introduction there courtesy of the United States.*' (Loeffler, 1990, 256). In this respect, let us consider CIAM's 4th conference on the functional city which ended up in Athens as well as Martin Wagner's 1935 lecture in Athens on urban planning. Of course, 1950s Athens was no Rio de Janeiro, but it is certain that the presence of modern architecture in the Greek capital was undermined in the American press.In the Greek press, on the other hand, the new American embassy did not cause any long-lasting sensation. We can say that it was welcomed in a climate

of political-diplomatic rapprochement between the two countries and a surging Americanization of popular culture. Indicatively, the popular weekly newspaper *Empros* celebrated the arrival in Athens of six American celebrities, scientist Robert Oppenheimer, author Irving Stone, Hollywood actor Robert Mitchum, director Robert Aldrich, actress Katherine Hepburn and architect Richard Stadelman. Stadelman, who was (and still is) the least known of all six had been assigned the supervision of the construction of Gropius's embassy in Athens. Stadelman was presented as a man familiarized with Greek customs and the local culture, who, nevertheless, didn't shy away from describing modern Greek architecture as 'rather backward' and of the Greek architects as 'lacking artistic spirit'. His suggestion was to bring closer Greek and American architects through cultural exchanges so as the former would catch up with the latter. Stadelman's views were described by the newspaper as 'objective'. (*Empros,* 1958, 14)

Thus, the acceptance of the American economic, technological and cultural superiority set the tone in the reception of the US embassy in Greece. Gropius's building was enthusiastically welcomed but rather than a constructive discussion of it, the Greek press offered edited versions of the official press release which Gropius's office issued on the occasion of the 1957 presentation of his designs in Athens. The most important steps on the promotion of the new project were the publication of its designs in the only Greek architectural journal of the period, *Architektoniki* (Architecture) in 1957 and an article by a major contemporary art critic, Angelos Prokopiou, in which the new embassy was overstatedly presented as '*the peak of the architectural transformation of Athens […] a paradigmatic work of twentieth-century architecture not only for Greece, but internationally*.' (Prokopiou, 1957, 25) Prokopiou had also interviewed Gropius on the occasion, but his interview, apart from Gropius's admiration of the vernacular architecture of the Aegean islands, contained little more than a reproduction of Gropius's press release. (Prokopiou, 1957b, 3) The same optimistic tone was echoed in a monthly English-language publication, *Pictures from Greece*, a month after the official opening of the embassy, in which the model character of Gropius's work was projected.'*The new building*,' wrote its author, '*aims at the creation of a new style appropriate for development in the country where, in the past, architecture*

reached its greatest heights as a pure art. And it will undoubtedly be beneficial to the restoration of Athens if the example presented to her is widely followed. ([Prokopiou], 1961, 8-9) The article concluded by stressing that the Embassy was built by Greek craftsmen and with the use of predominantly Greek building materials (marble, cement, plaster and tiles). In reality, however, this contribution of Greek building materials and workforce was part of the State Department's embassy-funding program; seeking to minimize congressional criticism over budget excesses, the FBO had established a policy that offered to the host countries debt deductions over wartime currency credits in exchange of local building materials and labour.

Another interesting review can be found in the conservative 1961 Greek-language volume *Modern Building* which was dedicated to the promotion of a moderate, classicising version of modern architecture. An anonymous article dedicated to the recently completed embassy building framed it within the wider context of the FBO project. With the exception of Richard Neutra (who had designed the Karachi embassy), the author commented, all FBO architects used different means of a common classicist form which conceived each architectural element not only in connection to its environment but also in purely aesthetic terms. Gropius's embassy is praised as the most successful of the FBO program precisely because from the point of view of the arrangement of spaces and their construction it was in tune with the most contemporary technologies, but from the point of view of formal expression it was '*completely alien to the character of modern architecture*.' (Modern Building, 1961, 354)

To wrap things up, Gropius's embassy building exemplifies a watered-down intersection between regionalism and modern architecture, a kind of populist modernism proposed by a colonial power to an 'underdeveloped' country and which is typical of the crisis of both regionalism and modernism in the 1960s. The representational pressures of national identities – both of the rising global power of the U.S. as well as of the post-World War II developing countries, such as Greece – favoured this hybrid regionalist/modernist style which most often was translated into an ornamented modernism. To which extend this architectural gesture satisfied the ideological ambitions of both sides is a

question open to further research. As regards the American Embassy in Athens, however, the building would soon (only seven years after its inauguration) stand as a symbol of internal intervention due to the role and support of the U.S. government to the military coup of 1967. The American embassy would be the finishing point of the annual demonstrations celebrating the 1973 riot at the capital's Technical School and the ensuing events that led to collapse of the dictatorship in 1974. America's diplomatic claims in Greece as well as the building's allusion to democracy were irreparably damaged.

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THE [LATIN] MODERNISM OF PONTI, COSTA AND BARRAGÁN

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Abstract

The work of Italian architect and designer Gio Ponti was for a long time removed from Italian architectural historiography, relying mostly on the difficulties of classifying it between rationalist codes or traditional/local and classic ones. During the 1950´s Ponti travelled extensively abroad, but it was in Latin America where he faced an architectural repertory expressed on a way which had a profound impact in his polymorphic career. While in Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico, Ponti could identify with a certain modern reasoning not only on a vernacular and local basis, but also rooted on a classical and Mediterranean one. Brought by the Europeans and local architects that studied abroad, these roots were reinterpreted locally to be the basis of some of the works of Lucio Costa in Brazil and Barragán in Mexico. A result of the of cross-cultural relations, these expressions cannot be taxed merely as a 'regionalist architecture' though, as this could reduce them to a superficial dichotomy as `there is no pure regional or international style whatsoever`. Instead, these architects shared a common reasoning on how and what to consider as their tradition, which included formal and cultural repertoires, construction techniques, climate responsiveness, and ways of living. Therefore, this article aimed to identify and analyse thru a 'comparative and transnational' approach, the effects and common aspects that the overseas incursions of three modernists masters - Lucio Costa, Barragan and Gio Ponti, had on their work.

Keywords: Gio Ponti, Barragán, Lucio Costa, Latin Modernism, vernacular.

Introduction

As D. J. Huppatz (2015: 188) declared, most narratives of Modern design are still *'based on a 'diffusionist model;'* following '*typically*' Nicolaus Pevsner´s writings on *Pioneers of the Modern Movement (1936),* they reiterate a Eurocentric tendency of a centre-periphery flow of knowledge. Patricio De Real (2015) on his introduction piece for the catalogue´s bibliography of the recent 2015´s Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) exhibition - *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955-1980,* addressed some key aspects of Latin

America´s written history of modern architecture. Corroborating with Huppatz´s line of thought, Del Real appointed Bruno Zevi´s accounts together with Pevsner´s as being responsible for having initiated the historiographic tendency of assuming Latin America´s architectural achievements '*as merely derivative of European models,'* with *'limited contributions to international discussions and formal explorations'* (Del Real, p. 296). Del Real concluded by reminding us that, '*if the history of modern architecture in Latin America is on its way to being consolidated, a history of modernism, one that incorporates the region's development, produced both from outside and from within the region, remains very much in construction*' (Del Real, p.297). Likewise, to Huppatz (2015: 195), the importance of '*establishing a global framework for design history*' involves including local, regional and national histories. In order to do that though, besides `*reframing existing knowledge as to avoid European exceptionalism,*' Huppatz (2015: 195) appointed that we must develop '*a better understanding of the multi-directional nature of flows*', regarding not only the designed objects, but also the designers involved, their movements, interactions and flow of information. Although Esra Ackan (2014: 119,120) discussed Post-colonial theories on architecture as a '*new way of understanding "non-Western" contexts*' and, therefore, challenging the Eurocentric canon, Elisabetta Andreoly and Adrian Forty (2004: 14,15) raised the issue that '*cultural exchanges are never simply unidirectional - as much as the colonizer tries to resist and refute this idea, he is as affected by the cultural shock just as the colonized is*.' Challenging already assumed positions, Del Real and Helen Gyger´s (2013: 22) recent collection of essays on Latin American Modern Architecture presented studies of important figures of Modernism in '*non-canonical contexts*'. In that sense, Gio Ponti´s Latin American incursions on the 1950´s are here presented as an opportunity to benefit from such re-examination. Ponti travelled extensively abroad during the 1950´s, but it was in Latin America where he faced an architectural repertory expressed on a way which had a profound impact in his career. While in Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico, Ponti recognized a certain modern reasoning rooted not only on a vernacular and local foundation, but also on a classical and Mediterranean one. Brought by the Europeans and developed by local architects that studied abroad, these roots were reinterpreted locally to be the basis of

some of the works of Lucio Costa in Brazil and Barragán in Mexico. Although the works of these three figures could be interpreted as '*regionalist architectures*', this categorization may lead, as Akcan (2010: 193) explained, to a '*bipolar*' interpretation of modern architecture in '*non-Western*' countries, where modern is confronted with regional; national with the international. But such a constraint - to Akcan (2010: 193)- reduces the '*complexities of cross-cultural relations*' to a superficial dichotomy as '*there is no pure regional or international style of expression*'.[1] Instead, these architects shared a common ground on how and what to consider as their tradition, which included formal and cultural repertoires, construction techniques, climate responsiveness, and ways of living. Following Del Real and Gyger´s (2013: 24) proposals, this article aimed to identify and analyse thru a '*comparative and transnational*' approach, the effects and common aspects that the overseas incursions of three modernists masters - Lucio Costa, Barragan and Gio Ponti, had on their work.

Ponti, Barragán and Mexico

> By the mid-1970s, Barragán's work was largely unappreciated, if not actually dismissed, inside Mexico and unknown outside of it. Yet, if his architecture remained suspect in some Mexican circles - on account of its elitism and idiosyncrasy, its aloof distance from the more pragmatic, socially oriented concerns of other prominent architects operating in that nation - it was soon validated internationally for its formal and poetic qualities (Eggener, 2002, p. 230).

Barragán in his 1980 Pritzker Prize acceptance speech concurred to Jay Pritzker´s words in declaring what he considered *'essential'* regarding his work ideology – to have devoted himself to architecture '*as a sublime act of poetic*

[1] As an alternative Akcan presents the use of translation as a ´conceptual framework that explains modernization in terms of the interaction between different places and nation-states, […] [discussing] the mutual dependence and interaction between different countries, and traces of the flows of people, ideas, images, information, and technologies across geographical space, as well as their varying degrees and modes of transformations at the new destinations.' E. Ackan, Bruno Taut's translations out of Germany. Toward a cosmopolitan ethics in architecture, in: Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean: vernacular dialogues and contested identities, J.F Lejeune, M. Sabatino (eds), Routledge, 2009, p.193.

imagination' (Barragán, 1980). But, as Liernur (1995: 6) explained, what gave Barragán´s architecture its `*inebriant quality*` were the dense relationships of designed spaces inhabited simultaneously by many dichotomies such as `*romanticism and classicism, tradition and modernity, clarity and mystery*.' According to Lucía S. A. Lozada (2016: 134,135), Barragán´s architecture was the result of the '*decantation of different traditions*,' ranging from '*European, American, Mexican and Asian sources*.' These external influences emerged early in his career, as a result of different trips abroad starting in 1925, after his graduation, where he visited in Spain the Moorish gardens of Alhambra and Generalife in Andalucia. On this trip he also went to Paris, to the *Exposition Internationale des Arts decoratives et industriels modernes*, and, besides getting in touch with Le Corbusier´s work, he discovered the Mediterranean garden designs and writings by architect and landscaper Ferdinand Bac (Lozada, 2016). To Juan P. Verea (2013: 52), Bac advocated a return to the '*old Mediterranean spirit,*' one that brought together '*a disenchanted pagan asepticism*,' with the '*treasures of the classic antiquity*' transmitted by the Moorish culture. When Barragán went back to Mexico, he decided to make explicit the close relation of that '*almost forgotten inheritance*` with the traditional constructions of his home land of Jalisco, of '*similar climate, sky and culture*' (Verea, p. 52). As Marco De Michelis (2001: 46) explained, by then the state of Jalisco was in conflict with the Mexican central government and in search of its autonomy, which reinforced the '*search for a specific local cultural tradition*`. In that scenario, Barragán and his companions – Rafael Urzúa, Pedro Castellanos and Ignacio Diaz Morales, '*sought to express a response*` (De Michelis, p. 47). That effort was, according to Claudia Velásquez (2015: 29), the basis for the foundation of the *tapatia* school, one that advocated a '*local as well as universal [architecture], adjusted to the cultural needs and economic momentum*'. Velásquez appointed as elements and resources of the modern *tapatia* architecture a combination of new techniques with a reinterpretation of traditional construction strategies and elements. Porticoes, terraces and patios of traditional farm houses and public buildings were employed altogether with the dominance of massive walls over voids. Another feature was the importance of the sky as another elevation, and the use of jalousies to filter light and give privacy (Velásquez, p.32, 33). On

1931 while in New York, Barragán took the opportunity to get in contact with Jaliscan painter Jose Clemente Orozoco - who was also in search for the `*essential roots in modernity*` and Austrian Functionalist architect, Frederick Kiesler; later in that year he went to Paris, where he finally met Ferdinand Bac and Le Corbusier (De Michelis, p.52). On 1935 Barragán moved to Mexico City; and from 1945 to 1950 he was involved with the gardens and urbanization of El Pedregal de San Angel. During that period, he designed his house and atelier in Tacubaya and the Prieto Lopez house (1948-49), located in El Pedregal urbanization. To Bendimez (2013: 124), the Pietro house was `*a synthesis between the tradition of the great Mexican country houses and the modern dwelling […] It has an scale that relates it with the great colonial houses and everything on it – gardens, patios, pools, decoration, finishing, demonstrate a surprising consistency.*` In 1952 Barragán returned to the Mediterranean area: he visited Italy and in the North of Africa, the Magreb. To Lozada, `*this encounter with the Mediterranean architecture [confirmed] the idea acquired by Barragán at the Alhambra, the sensations and effects that a heavy wall can create in an architectural space through the use of it*` (Lozada, p. 133). In 1967 Barragán realized, according to Guillermo E. Bendiméz (2013), one of his most outstanding architectural and landscape works - the San Cristobal stables in Zaragoza. In 1980, Barragán declared that

> 'the lessons [to be] learned from the […] architecture of […] the provincial towns of my country have been a permanent source of inspiration. Such as, for instance, the whitewashed walls; the peace to be found in patios and orchards; the colorful streets; […] As there is a deep historical link between these teachings and those of the North African and Moroccan Villages, they too have enriched my perception of beauty in architectural simplicity.' (Barragán, 1980, p. 2).

The Gio Ponti Epistolary Archives evidences a lasting friendship of Ponti and Barragán dating from 1964 to 1979, until the former´s passing away. In 1935 Ponti published in Domus for the first time the work of Barragán (Ponti, no. 92, 1935). The article depicted Barragán's 1931 renovation of the family ranch in

Chapala and the 1934's Harper Garibi and Emiliano Robles Leon houses. On a brief note Ponti called attention to the readers to the '*wall bonds, stairs arrangements, massive volumes and shadows effects*' under the intensity of the sky, characteristics also of the Mediterranean accents promulgated by Ponti´s proposals at the time. In 1952, after his first trip to Brazil that year, Ponti went to Mexico to the VIII Panamerican congress, when he took the opportunity to visit El Pedregal and Barragán's house. Published in a Domus article in 1953, Ponti (1953, no. 280) stressed the importance of considering architecture as art and in that case, made explicit Barragán's poetic dimension when creating a landscape: *'a lyrical and ascetic atmosphere exists in this spaces by Barragán: the terraces are rooms completed by the sky, separated from earth; the garden has the trees as prisoners; the staircase is for only one person […] The house is a retreat*.' Later, Ponti appointed the influence of Barragán's design strategies in his design reasoning during the 1950´s. First on an article of his Dr. Taglianetti's house design in São Paulo – when referring to its gardens as an '*hortus conclusus*'; bounded by high walls and presenting the sky as another elevation – a feature also depicted in his 1930´s Mediterranean partnerships with Bernard Rudofsky and the Venezuelan Villa Planchart (Ponti, Domus, no. 283, 1953; Ponti, Domus no.303, 1955). The second opportunity was, as Ponti stated, by '*contradiction.*' When regarding the importance of lightness in his Villa Planchart's design in contrast to El Pedregal´s massiveness, Ponti declared: '*the idea that a construction "rests on the land" like a butterfly, instead, comes as a contrast, observing the marvellous volcanic garden of El Pedregal* […] *Since that I have dreamed [instead] of a house that would rest nicely on the land, like a butterfly (white) without volume or mass.'* (Ponti, Domus, no. 303, 1955). On 1956, Ponti (1956, no. 321) published the Prieto Lopéz house (1948-49) in the urbanization of El Pedregal along with images of Barragan´s house. He evidenced the wall treatments and the use of terraces*: 'terraces [made] of walls like rooms, completed by the sky and separated of the ground.*' In 1968, on the pages of Domus Ponti (1968, no. 468) depicted this time the walled stables of San Cristobal (1967-68).

Ponti, Brazil and Costa

> For distinct reasons, Brazil and Italy entered the XXth century still defining their cultural identity as modern nations, besides being outdated culturally, economically and technologically in relation to more industrialized countries. To overcome this situation, […] they both searched in their pasts the foundations to build their identities. […] Like the Brazilians, the Italians lived out of the centers where the new modern proposals were been produced, inputting on them the development of selection criteria and ways of adapting these proposals to their climatic, productive and cultural conditions. […] (Anelli, 2010, p.10).

According to Andreoli and Forty (2004: 11), since its beginning, Brazil´s modernism was considered a '*genuinely national*' manifestation, acclaimed by its divergence from the main western cannon. Albeit that, as Carlos Comas (2002: 1) explained, during the 1930's in Brazil '*an appropriation of modern architecture which [emphasized] its classical Mediterranean roots and the analogy of its elements and principles with a rational and national constructive tradition´* was taking place, '*[culminating] in the equation of a modern architecture of Corbusian vein and Brazilian flavour*' at the end of that decade. In this scenario, as Guilherme Wisnick (2001: 7) reminds us, architect Lucio Costa is regarded as a key-figure in the implementation of modern architecture in Brazil. This role was consolidated on 1936, when he overtook the leadership of the design team for the Ministry of Education and Public Health in the Brazilian capital of Rio de Janeiro. In fact, since the 1930´s, Costa employed on his designs elements of colonial Luso-Brazilian architecture like the patio and the veranda (Wisnick, 2001, p.37; Carlucci, 2005, p. 113). Acting as instruments of design generation and articulation, together with the *muxarabies,* they connected internal and external spaces without prejudice to privacy (Carlucci, 2005, 59). According to Comas (2002: 6), '*the use of Luso-Brazilian architecture as an iconographic source*' by Costa affirmed '*the exploration of vernacular autochthonous without dissolving the link with the machine.*' Parallel to Le Corbusier´s attempts with the '*Mediterranean vernacular*,' as Comas (2004: 23)

reiterated, Costa was claiming an inheritance when advocating *'a Mediterranean crib for modern architecture and associating it with Le Corbusier […] Although bastard, by genetics, acculturation or transculturation, the Brazilian architect [could not] escape being western'*. Costa´s theoretical model was consolidated on writings from 1945 which were published only on 1952, under the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Health´s seal (Costa, 1952). On his writings, Costa distinguished two main cultural axes regarding the '*plastic conception of form*': a Nordic-Eastern one, connected to a '*gothic exuberance*', '*dynamic'* in contrast to a Mesopotamian-Mediterranean one, from the southern Europe and Northern Africa, of '*geometric purity*', '*static'* (Costa, 1952, p. 10, 11, 12). To Costa, the colonial architecture of the Spanish and Portuguese America while belonging in its origins to the Mediterranean tradition was also developed on the Baroque cycle of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries, therefore drinking from both sources (Costa, 1952, p. 17). Costa concluded therefore, that Modern art and architecture should come as the result of the fusion of both concepts: *plastic-ideal* (western) and *organic-functional* (eastern). As Wisnick (2001: 16) appointed, Costa linked Brazilian construction to a '*combined genealogy: popular thru an erudite way, on which the Mediterranean tradition ended on Modernism*'. On 1948, the director of SPHAN requested Costa to travel to Portugal to conduct studies '*in order to elucidate the capital points of Portuguese influence* in *the formation and evolution of the plastic arts in Brazil*' (Franco de Andrade apud Piccarolo, 2013, p.41).[2] From this trip Costa concluded that due to the variation of architectural typologies present on different regions of Portugal, '*it was impossible to establish coherent lines of derivation for their colonial developments*' (Piccarolo, 2013, p. 42). Therefore, as Gaia Piccarolo explained, this allowed him to '*conceive of an independent development of Portuguese architecture in the colony*', one that also '*[…] demonstrated its "own personality" and was as authentic as legitimate as the original*' (Piccarolo, 2013, p.42).

Ponti, strain to any adoption of established dogmas (Ponzio, 2013, p.14), always evaluated design ideas which he somehow could relate to, and in his Latin American incursions that was no exception. If in Mexico, Ponti related to

[2] Costa returned to Portugal on 1952, spending the whole year there, in order to continue his studies. Piccarolo, 2013, p.42.

Barragán's interpretations of traditional Mexican architecture, in Brazil it was an early reading of the Brazilian modernism that called his attention - before Brasilia but related to Costa's theories,[3] specially in the use of *brise-soleils*, patios, ceramic panels (with azulejos), *cobogós*[4] and inner tropical gardens. Moreover, Ponti´s visual sequences depicted usually on his 'animated' plans – dating as far as his collaborations with Rudofsky in the Mediterranean area (Miodini, 2001, p.23), can be associated to Guilherme Wisnik´s (2001: 38) '*domestic experience*' of Costa and Barragán: a '*succession of spaces in which the diverse activities of the private sphere correspond to affective places in harmony with the temperament of those who live in it*.'

Conclusion

> […] the framing of modern Brazilian architecture in a national or regional modernism is a half-truth. Promoted by Germanic or Anglo-Saxon historians [...], it obscures both the international dimension of the affirmation of national identity since the 1930s and the international dimension in the Brazilian contribution to modern architecture […] A incompatibility between modern and national is a construct that does not resist not even to a superficial analysis but strengthen the European and North-American cultural domination. (Comas, 2006, p.26)

[3] Although Ponti acknowledged and published a few of Lucio Costa´s works on Domus from 1950 to 1960, there were not found evidences of a personal encounter of both figures, since in 1952, when Ponti was in Brazil, Costa was in Europe.

[4] Muxarabiê (in Arabic: Masharabiya): brought by the Iberian settlers to Latin America and Brazil; 'Commonly used to designate windows or grills with latticed work screen of turned or carved wood. Mashrabiya were a hallmark of Islamic domestic architecture. These windows provided protection from the sunrays and offered privacy to women from passers-by'. Gelosia or graticci are vernacular Italian screens made of brick or wood 'used to filter light [allowing] for continuous air circulation'; 'Cobogó appeared in the 1920s, in Recife, and its name come from the combination of the first syllable of the last names of their creators. They are an inheritance of Arab culture, based on muxarabies - built in wood, were used to partially close the internal environments. […] Despite the visual permeability, cobogós, in a way, bring privacy to the user. Made of concrete and brick at the beginning, they began to be produced also in ceramics and other different materials.' http://www.aucegypt.edu/walking_tours/cairo/glossary/glossary.html;
https://www.archdaily.com/875130/cobogos-a-brief-history-and-its-uses
http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/gelosia/;

As Miodini (2001: 33) mentioned, Ponti´s insertion in Modern Italian historiography has been a difficult task; not a modern or traditionalist, until the 1960´s he was absent from many important historical accounts, only coming back to the scene from the 1980´s on. Added to that, despite not explicitly willing to elaborate theories, Ponti´s work shares a position similar to what Fernandez (2009: 7) identified on Costa and Barragán´s: '*they choose a register of their thinking/acting distant from the historiographical canon of modernity (as Gideon´s or Frampton´s), getting closer to a kind of programmed anachronism as an evident and calculated path […]*.' Sharing a common interest on vernacular, classical and Mediterranean traditions, Ponti, Costa and Barragán, each on their manner, transposed modern reasoning to a vernacular and local basis. This included, as appointed earlier, formal and cultural repertoires, construction techniques, climate responsiveness, and ways of living. If Lejeune and Sabatino (2010: 5) designated a '*Mediterranean modernism,*' on this case it would be more suitable to refer to a 'Latin Modernism' - one that travelled back and forth across the ocean, sharing a common base.

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TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN THE PORTUGUESE INNER COLONISATION
The laboratorial case of Pegões

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Abstract

The intertwining of tradition and modernity is a rooted discussion within the Portuguese history of architecture since the mid-twentieth century. From then on, the dichotomisation of erudite and vernacular architectures, urban and rural cultures and settings, nationalist and universalistic values, seems to have been debated and reviewed. This paper aims to contribute to such de-essentialisation processes by focusing on the Portuguese Estado Novo project of inner colonisation conducted by the Junta de Colonização Interna (1936-1974), and examining the dialogues and frictions between its traditional and modern ideals and accomplishments as spatialised in one very particular colony – Pegões. On the one hand, the paper ponders upon the Portuguese colonisation's neo-physiocratic basis, locating the tradition-modernity binomial in the intent to modernise the agrarian world while perpetuating its traditional lifestyle, simultaneously fostering an economic development, social control and national identity. On the other hand, the paper draws upon the laboratorial colony of Pegões, which was the first, the biggest and the only one built in Southern Portugal, to more thickly analyse the colonisation's politics and fulfilments, and its understanding and uses of traditional and modernist ideals, aesthetics and representations. Special attention is given to the dialectics between political and economic agencies, social negotiations, embodied experiences, and meanings and affections, by looking into the official-written history of the colony and emotional-sensory memory of its settlers. This approach results from the work carried out within the scope of MODSCAPES research project (funded by HERA Uses of the Past), notably in what concerns its research line on the memories and perceptions of European colonisation policies, schemes and resulting landscapes.

Keywords: Traditionalism, Modernism, Heritage.

Introduction

The intertwining of tradition and modernity is a rooted discussion within the Portuguese history of architecture since the mid-twentieth century. Marked by political readings and social positionings, such discussion tends to assert a dialogical relation between modern architecture and vernacularisms. However, it

also sets apart modern movement and national architectures (Portas, 1978), modernism and critical regionalism (Tostões, 1997), in what is seen as the polarities and permeabilities of architecture within the Portuguese history of art (Costa, 1995). A recognised challenge here lies in definitions. Different authors use the terms modern architecture, modern movement, modernism, to refer to interchanging referents. According to McLeod (2017), such polysemy led to the banalisation of 'modernism' which nowadays needs adjectives and adverbs to be clear on purpose[1]. This reflects the postmodern revision of the concept and its defiance of a hegemonic definition. But also the academic reluctance in thinking architecture beyond its technical and aesthetical frames, and within its political, intellectual and social milieu. In Portugal, attempts to overcome this bias led to contrasting readings of modernist architecture as an expression of a fascist regime (Brites, 2016) and its contestation (Almeida, 2008). However, despite the efforts to blur erudite and popular cultures' apartness in light of postmodern hybridity, cultural binomials like the urban/rural or the tradition/intellectual keep being essentialised due to the nostalgic imagining of rurality and tradition as authentic and natural (Vellinga, 2007).

This paper aims to contribute to this discussion by drawing attention to the policies, schemes and projects of inner colonisation in Portugal, taking one colony as a case study. Broadly speaking, inner colonisation was carried out by several totalitarian and authoritarian European regimes inspired by neo-physiocraticist, modernist and political utopias throughout the 20th century, and aimed to develop agrarian economies and foster national and nationalistic identities through a modernisation of agricultural sectors, resettlement of populations, and rural planning and building[2]. It therefore presents a unique case study to discuss the intertwining of tradition and modernity, rural and urban, popular and erudite categories.

Comparatively, Portugal was a poor rural country with scarce industrial development ruled by an authoritarian conservative regime that relied on

[1] Some examples are the 'high' of Scott, the 'anxious' of Goldhagen and Legault, the 'southern' of CEAA, or the 'other' of DOCOMOMO.
[2] Its comparative analysis is the core subject of the research project MODSCAPES – Modernist Reinventions of the Rural Landscape, in the scope of which the research that led this paper was conducted.

different political standing elites and imposed a traditional order on society. Consequently, its inner colonisation project led by the Junta de Colonização Interna (1936-1974) during the right-wing dictatorship of Estado Novo (1933-1974), was volatile in ideological and technological guidelines, and constrained in scale and impacts.

One particular colony excels in the context of Portuguese inner colonisation: Pegões. On the one hand, looking at the past, most authors acknowledged Pegões as JCI laboratorial settlement due to its location, extension and material and social schemes of implementation. On the other hand, looking at the present, Pegões is still active in the agricultural sector, made a name in the wine business, as is under a process of heritagisation in political, social and intellectual arenas. Thus, Pegões is a particularly eloquent field to examine how different actors at scene physically and conceptually located and keep locating tradition and modernity in social space through social representations, relationships and practices that bring together popular and erudite culture, rural and urban features (cf. Low, 1996).

Still at an exploratory stage of research, this paper aims to stress how broader perspectives on built space can enlighten these entanglements, by putting into a dialogue official, intellectual and social discourses on Pegões, collected by documental and bibliographic research, exploratory fieldtrips, second-hand testimonies of settlers, and their online shared memories.

The laboratorial and the exceptional case of Pegões colony

Several authors have justified the laboratorial character of Pegões in JCI purpose to test its policies and plans development's management (Guerreiro, 2015). However, this assertion calls for moderation. Indeed, Pegões was the first colony planned from scratch by JCI[3] and its plans were presented in the same year of JCI's organic reconfiguration (1942)[4]. Notwithstanding, Pegões evinces

[3] The previous colonies of Milagres and Sabugal were inherited from previous institutions operating on inner colonisation.
[4] Decree-Law n.º 32:439, Diário do Governo, 24 November 1942.

exceptional features that preclude undertaking it linearly as the prototype of Portuguese inner colonisation.

First, Pegões' lands were state-owned, not common lands nor expropriated. They were donated in will by the charitable landowner Rovisco Pais to the Lisbon Civil Hospitals in 1932, ending up in JCI's estate in 1937 (Pereira, 2004). Secondly, Rovisco himself had implemented a colonisation process in 1/3 of Pegões farmstead, attracting around 120 families from different origins (Mestre, 2009)[5]. This facilitated the process and avoided tensions within the debate that opposed landlords and progressist elites on the modalities of agrarian reformism. In third place, all authors acknowledge the twofold dimensions of JCI actions, one being technical-scientific and the other political-ideological (e.g. Silva, 2011). Hereof, considering that rurality was a key factor to inner colonisation as an economy space and a repository of national identity, and that Pegões was the only colony built in the Southern Portugal, on the outskirts of a major urban centre, and close to a main access to national borders, it is at least reasonable to question whether Pegões wasn't foremost JCI's chief act of propaganda.

These exceptional features might explain why Pegões excelled in material and rhetorical investments comparing to others colonies. Its 1942 plan was an extensive and diversified programme that included land clearing, manuring, hydraulic works, reservoirs, irrigation systems, road construction, houses typologies and several public facilities[6]. These assembled three nuclei with plots organised along the hydraulic network of natural streams in Pegões Velhos and Faias, and an artificial system in Figueiras[7]. Such a disperse mode of settlement, moderated in Figueiras, suited the idea of complete and self-sufficient agrarian dwelling units (*casal agrícola*). Each unit included 11ha of dry land for cereals production, 4ha of vineyard, 2ha of pine forest and 1ha of irrigated land, and a building that concentrated housing and farming facilities such as a stable, a

[5] Today's village of Foros, between Pegões colony's nucleous of Figueiras and Faias, resulted from Rovisco's initiative.
[6] Information collected through in different volumes published by JCI regarding the colonisation of Pegões in the ICS's Archive of Social History and the archives of the Directorate-General of Agriculture and Rural Development of Portugal.
[7] Plots differed in size: 20 ha in Pegões Velho, 18,5 ha in Figueiras and 15 ha in Faias.

pigsty, a silo, a poultry house and a rabbit hutch. Only a roofless dung was physically dethatched.

The formal and functional options behind the plans of the dwelling units in Pegões conferred them a sense of unity whilst simultaneously keeping apart people and animals, genders and usages, for the sake of new hygiene standards. These have been considered a modernist subtext of JCI's action despite the buildings being asserted to be inspired in the traditional features that the Estado Novo reinvented as national architecture (e.g. Guerreiro, 2015).

Sill, modernism in inner colonisation is mainly associated with the functional, aesthetics and technical layouts of its public buildings, particularly in Pegões where paraboloide buildings stand out as exceptional expressions of Portuguese modernism. However extraordinary these may be, looking beyond architectural features, what is exceptional in Pegões is the abundance of these buildings. While other colonies fell short on public facilities, Boalhosa for instance has only two, in Pegões JCI actually built four schools, two churches, two medical centres, three training centres, three technical assistance centres, three breeding centres, along with storage buildings and several dwellings for technicians, teachers, social assistants, and visitants.

The physical and material investments in Pegões translated into its social space. The 206 families of settlers that moved into Pegões, in 1952[8], were by far the largest resettlement carried out by JCI. Only 313 houses were built and 253 inhabited in the whole of the other colonies. Such demographics cannot be understood solely as dimensional today, notably when political, intellectual and social discourses address the past of inner colonisation through their present engagement in acts of remembering and interpreting. After all, place as a conceptual category is a social construction that depends on the way multiple actors live, know, remember, contest and imagine social spaces (Feld e Basso, 1996).

[8] Initial plans pointed at around 2500 people. The built plan accommodated around 1100 people. 288 families applied, of which 94 families were allocated to Pegões Velho, 50 to Figueiras, and 62 to Faias.

Overall, two issues deserve special attention here. The first was the idea of transforming rural workers in small rural landowners (Maia, 2018). JCI announced the colonies as an incubator of settlers for the colonial empire and a means to combat growing proletariat through the fostering of a rural population that guaranteed Portuguese nationality (SNI, 1945). But this would be pursued by attracting rural workers with the promise of ownership over agricultural self-sufficient private properties in a time of severe unemployment and poverty. Emplaced, this population would reproduce the traditional lifestyles that the State claimed to foster patriotism with the assistance of social control programmes and legislation on the indivisible, inalienable and inheritable nature of the colonisation plots[9].

The second issue relates to forms of collective identification. In order to apply, settlers had to be healthy Portuguese men, hold agrarian experience, no record of misconduct, express love for work and family, and comply with the social and political order[10]. As stated in the Constitution (1933), family was the root of the Portuguese race, the basis for political order, and the labour force unit in rural space. Other forms of social identification were mostly discarded. In fact, nationwide, JCI's calls for settlers resulted in the gathering of people coming from Southern to Northern Portugal in one single community, easing the fostering of a national but not regional ones. Religious identities were not discarded either, but its Catholic supremacy was latent in the building of churches and the colonisation's framing in the agrarian social doctrine (JCI, 1962). In short, JCI put to practice the Estado Novo trilogy 'God, Fatherland, Family'.

Aesthetics and politics in the study of inner colonisation

Most authors that address the topic of inner colonisation in Portugal through its architectural and urban designs acknowledge that features of tradition and of modernity were entangled in the programmes and plans of JCI. In Pegões, the

[9] Law 2014, Diário do Governo, 27 May 1946.
[10] Decree-Law n.º 36:709, Diário do Governo, 5 January 1948.

functional and hygienic modern concerns with the house (Catarino, 2010) are counterpoised to the romantic reinterpretation of rural grammars in the image of a Portuguese house (Coelho, 2009). Dwelling types are simultaneously understood to have standardised housing conditions while avoiding urban erudite meaningless monotony (Guerreiro, 2015). But provocatively, by calling in other housing programmes of Estado Novo, like the urban Economic Houses, one could read these modernising traits conversely.

Comparable interrogations arise regarding public spaces. Urban arrangements are seen as displays of a modern territorial legibility (Guerreiro, 20015), but share dispositions with traditional villages. Mechanisation of agriculture is acknowledged a major goal (Sousa, 1964) but settlers were given traditional tools and performed traditional rural labour (Pereira, 2004). Modernist buildings in Pegões are extolled in aesthetic and technical features (Coelho, 2009), but their spatial and functional programmes translate a traditional social order and structure. So, the question to be raised is if modernist buildings in Pegões can be thought of as spatial strategies to perpetuate a traditional rural community, despite any modernity in their formal features, and whether this challenges their modernist conception.

Despite some efforts in providing modern life standards, JCI strived to politically and technically enforce tradition in Pegões by regulation and social control measures, but also through urban and architectural solutions that reinforced social classes' divisions and rooted a self-representation of settlers as peasants. The problem of understanding its modern-traditional entanglement seems to lie in the distinct conceptualisation of modernism depending on this tradition being reinterpreted by a regionalist or a nationalistic purpose. However, regionalism and nationalism in architecture are not methodological distinct (Martins, 1999); and processes of tradition's defamiliarization, interpretation and re-semantisation have operated since the 19th century throughout Europe, both propelling movements of social reform and acting as repression tools (Lowenthal, 1985).

Moreover, following on Griffin (2007), modernism is as a quest for an alternative modernity to the societal erosion brought up by modernisation as a secularising force. Because it is cosmological, and not aesthetic, modernism became a powerful frame in political arenas. Herein the author asserted fascism as one of its expressions, recalling its palingenetic ultranationalism having fought traditional elites' decadence through a totalitarian control of national life that aimed to regenerate its ethos. Foremost, Griffin's argument apprises us to take caution in relating modernism to one or another political stance. Modernism encompasses fascism, but as cosmological phenomenon it extends way beyond. So, its analysis cannot be limited by looking at the world of things, unless it also takes into consideration the world of ideas.

The main idea of this paper was precisely to bring forward the above two key lines of reasoning into the analysis of how modern architecture, regionalism and nationalism intertwine. Furthermore, because the exceptional character of Pegões is located in past and present terms, its cannot be analysed in material forms apart from their contextual and dynamic imagination. Understanding space as meaningful implies looking into both its social production and social construction, i.e. the social, economic, ideological and technological factors behind its physical creation, and the meaning construed within the processes of social exchange, conflict and control that mediate its emotional and sensorial experience (Low, 1996).

It is in this frame that built space becomes a '*means by which we give form to, and come to an understanding of ourselves, others, or abstractions such as the nation or the modern*' (Miller, 1994, p. 397). Through the social sciences lens, architecture is a process of objectification of culture that gives material form to cultural processes. It thus holds latent possibilities of meaning, because things, like people, have social lives (Appadurai, 1986, p.3). This frames heritage as, more than a thing, a '*process of engagement, an act of communication and an act of making meaning in and for the present*' (Smith, 2006, p. 1). One is thus required to pay attention to current events in the understanding of the past, namely in Pegões, where an emblematisation as the laboratory of Portuguese

inner colonisation has built up its representation as the spatial locus of the dialogues between modernism, regionalism and nationalism.

(Re)imagining Pegões

Looking into written materials on Pegões and oral testimonies of its former settlers, deviations come to light. Of course, by nature of speech, distinct sources refer to different natures of reasoning. Literature emphasises the outputs of inner colonisation in depictions of policies, programmes and materiality. Former settlers share life stories and experiences, pointing out family and social networks, and remembering special and distressing events. But in the case of Pegões, there is moreover a different way of looking at the colony.

Erudite production and social actors set apart and bring together, respectively, the social production and social construction of Pegões as a place. Providing an illustration, most authors that address built space in Pegões consider that housing and public buildings were divorced in aesthetics and ideological frames, relating this gap to its traditional versus modernist languages and facilities; but settlers' testimonies dilute both this matching and apartness in an imagining of the colony as a whole. Notably, their memories take built space as the locus of personal and collective experiences and emotions that remit to the two issues highlighted above in regard to JCI social project - ownership and identities.

Concerning their houses, former settlers share a fondness for its '*Portuguese architectural style*'[11] while resenting their children studying at petrol lamps' lights, roads turning into muddy swamps during winter, access to potable water being difficult, and sinks being kept intact for guests while families used wooden cooking bowls[12]. They remember women sewing and men playing cards in fun evenings[13] in a performance of gender roles that was reproduced by the technicians in the agricultural fields and their wives in the control of hygiene and

[11] Colonato de Santo Isidro de Pegões, facebook page, 25 January 2014.
[12] Interview with Moisés by Sara Pereira, 27 October 2004.
[13] Eulália Lebre, online comment in Colonato de Santo Isidro de Pegões, facebook page, 21 January 2015.

socialisation within the domestic space[14]. Even the memory of suffering arises in contradictory nostalgic discourses that '*wish to see the model again applied*'[15]. Ownership and poverty are at the core of these feelings:

> You were right to stress that point because nothing was given to us, I have heard many people saying that the settlers got their lands for free but they forget that in 1950 paying 250.000 or 300.000 escudos was a fortune for those who came here bringing only the clothes on their back[16].

Concerning public facilities, settlers remember public space and buildings through the lens collective activities and services that locate their emotions and experiences in space. The modernist architectures of Pegões extoled by literature are looked at as the doing of '*crazy architects*'[17], but public buildings foremost represent an urban quality of life perceived in access to health care, education, leisure, labour and technical assistance[18]. Settlers say mass was non-binding[19], but remember Catholic fests distributing treats, marriage to be a prerequisite and the foremen and his wife to be their godparents (Pereira, 2004). In the banquets and balls organised by JCI, settlers were invited to participate through in-kind contributions and dancing presentations but seated at different tables[20]. Spatial experiences also convoke leisure activities preparing and going on summer camps, gathering to see films or radio broadcasts[21], going on tours to villages and museums that exhibit the national past[22].

Whilst positive at large, settlers' shared memories unveil how control over forms of socialisation aimed to enforce particular identities, these being family-related, class-related, religious and civic. The latter calls for attention. JCI promoted livestock parades, domestic care awards, sports and folklore demonstrations, training courses on pottery and female chores in Pegões (Pereira, 2004). These

[14] Interview with Custódia Vilela by Sara Pereira, 26 October 2004.
[15] Interview with Mr. Vilela by Sara Pereira, 27 October 2004.
[16] Maria Moreira, online comment in Colonato de Santo Isidro de Pegões, facebook page, 26 January 2014.
[17] Interview with Florêncio Pinto by Isabel Lopes, 18 July 2008.
[18] Interview with Inocência Eustáquio by Isabel Lopes, 21 August 2008.
[19] Interview with Luís Vida by Sara Pereira, 27 October 2004.
[20] Interview with Francisco Vilela by Sara Pereira, 27 October 2004.
[21] Interview with Moisés by Sara Pereira, 27 October 2004.
[22] Interview with Vilas Boas by Sara Pereira, 27 October 2004.

boosted settlers' self-representation but, more importantly, enhanced their social capitals by creating the opportunity for each settler to be a better peasant than is colleagues, a fitter worker to agrarian life, and more conscious men of family duties. Social mobility was thereby made possible, as shown by memories of national farmer meetings and scholarships to attend agrarian course[23]. But it was set within the limits of the social group of the settlers.

Modernity and tradition as cultural heritage in Pegões

Summarising, settlers' memory is based on personal experiences that highlight JCI's strategies to instil and crystallise the idea of the Portuguese folks as peasants in love for their Church, family and work, who knew their place in national society. This is particularly important to think about the ways Pegões is nowadays emblematised on the basis of its materiality. If places are not inherently valuable, heritage is the set of processes engaged with the act of remembering and forgetting and attributing meaning (Smith, 2006). This means that discourses on architecture and related social and cultural practices, and not architecture per se, are the production of heritage. Hence, the constitution of Pegões as a parish in 1958 is just as important as its visiting by the political elites of Estado Novo; the municipality's implementation of a Safeguard Plan[24] contributes to the heritagisation of the colony as much as the publishing of monographic volumes (Pereira et al, 2009) or the broadcast of a settlers' meeting in national news[25].

Of course these acts empower settlers' representation of Pegões. Memories shared online are clear on the idea that '*if they had explained this when we were young, we would have dealt better with the prejudice and discrimination of being the children of settlers"*[26]. But the emphasis put by political and intellectual agents in modernist architectures obscures their own purposes of preserving the

[23] Interview with Francisco Vilela by Sara Pereira, 27 October 2004.
[24] Proposal nº. 4092/01, Preparation of Layout Plan for the Safeguard and Valorisation of the Former Agricultural Colony of Santo Isidro de Pegões, ordinary meeting of the City Council of Montijo, 12 September 2001.
[25] May 2014, SIC television broadcast.
[26] Colonato Santo Isidro de Pegões, facebook page, 20 March 2014.

memory of a '*space of living memories that represents the identity of the county*' (Pereira et al, 2009). Authorised heritage discourses hold the power to enunciate official heritage, but they also determine '*the way we think, talk and write about heritage*' (Smith, 2006: 11).

The anxieties that are implicit in the different discourses about Pegões as heritage are illustrative. The municipality is concerned with the preservation of architectures that symbolise a historical event of social, agrarian and architectural value[27]. Architects denounce the pathologies and dissonances that threaten an exceptional specimen of their modernist past (Pereira et al, 2009). Former settlers too bemoan the colony's state of conservation and disfigurement, but are simultaneously referring to its architectural preservation and its social continuity[28].

There is indeed an apartness in the way settlers, political and intellectual actors engage in remembering and construing meaning towards the future. Their stated goals are explicit: settlers gather personal stories to keep the memory of the colony alive; elites propose the rehabilitation of Pegões' core centre in respect to its material integrity for future generations being presented with architectural authenticity. The point here is that such disconnection results from self-referenced discourses of those in positions of power that privilege monumentality and expertise on the basis of an innate value of material repertoires and obscure other forms of identity and heritage performance. This allows essentialised understandings of modernism to remain uncontested because it depoliticises the social production of Pegões and detachs its representation from the settlers' social practice and experience of place. It thus works against itself, leaving behind the idea of a colony as a political, intellectual, economic, social and cultural whole where modernism, regionalism and nationalism intertwine.

[27] Idem.
[28] Quitéria Lobo, online comment in Colonato de Santo Isidro de Pegões, facebook page, 26 January 2014.

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THE SPACE OF POMPEIAN DOMUS TOWARDS LE CORBUSIER HOSPITAL OF VENICE

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Abstract

Pompeian domus are the result of a spontaneous, annular process, which through continuous modifications and adjustments, and sometimes errors, affirmed over time a recognizable typological model. Few spatial elements held together by a central void, the patio, constitute the domestic environment. With the same simplicity, they are joined together through the cardo-decumanic structure, constituting urban fabric.
Charles-Edouard Jeanneret discovered Pompeii during the Voyage d'Orient in 1911. He studied the city catching proportions, distances between spaces, human dimension as well as main domus character: introversion.
In Pompeii, while drawing the order of the Forum, the young C.-E. Jeanneret discovered the invention of these houses made of thick, hermetic walls that enclose an intimate and luminous space. The L-shaped plan of the Tragic Poet House, of the Labyrinth House and of the Silver Wedding House, would perhaps support and direct the theorization of habitat minimum concept: this is an essential, intimate living cell with a generous amount of natural light. This knowledge and reflections made in his youth would accompany the Master's production in many projects. However, it is perhaps in the project for the Hospital of Venice (1963) that they condense and assume a preponderant role. The domus, as cells, aggregate themselves around patios. These simple systems combined one to another, cling to the existing Venetian fabric whilst aligned in a cardo-decumanic order. With the same force of the domus they are introverted looking for intimacy and light.

Keywords: Le Corbusier, ruins, Pompeii, Hospital of Venice.

From Italy to Italy

The Venice hospital is the last work of Corbusian production (1963), and it is the most developed project among those he had conceived for Italy, such as the Cooperative Village of Pontinia (1934), La Banlieue de Rome (1935), the Church for Bologna (1963) and the Olivetti factory for Rho (1963). Political events,

Olivetti departure and finally the approach the end of his own life made however impossible for Le Corbusier to realize one of his works in Italy.

Italy had been so loved by the architect since his first trip in 1907, when he captured the beauty of the Renaissance in Florence, and he caught the importance of details finesse. Such first familiarity with Italy marked his curiosity and strengthened his interest in architecture. This initial learning phase culminates in 1911 *Voyage d'Orient*. During this, he reinforced his awareness and knowledge of history and especially he built up his imprinting towards the Ancient World. The journey is full of expectations and provides him some revelations, consumed day by day discovering live architectures he had already studied on books before departure (Turner, 2001). The visit of ancient sites provides to the apprentice architect confirmations, findings and discoveries. Such images and suggestions, found in Istanbul, Athens, Rome and Pompeii, would represent over years a strong reference for the construction of *his* Modern architecture, coming back in the hand of the architect in the act of creation.

Pompeii, urban layout and Pompeian intimacy

Charles-Edouard Jeanneret arrives in Naples after his stay in Athens, during which he has produced an average of twenty drawings and annotations per day. From his arrival in Brindisi on 6 October 1911, he climbs the Italian peninsula up to the city of Naples:

> After Brindisi I saw all styles, all species of houses, all sorts of trees and flowers, of grass! Mountains have their appearance and big names. Styles are more complicated: often uncertain, hideous, disgusting agglomerations. Interiors of Churches are horrible, so are paintings. People shout in the streets screaming and lacking in character. (Jeanneret, 1984, p. 312, my own translation)

There are relatively few references to Naples in the chapter *En Occident*, contained in his book *Voyage d'Orient,* completed in July 1965. He impresses in his mind the city landscape observed from *Vomero* neighbourhood and he

portrays the gulf, remarking in drawings rising elements that emerge from the steep fabric of the city.

His interest is immediately catalysed by the opportunity to visit Pompeii, that represent one of the discoveries of *Voyage d'Orient*. In fact, the visit to such archaeological site wasn't in fact foreseen in the itinerary of the trip. This rises by the lucky visit of Athens Archaeological Museum (Zannier, in Gresleri, 1984, p. 479), where Jeanneret could see some records of Pompeii archaeological site.

A further hypothesis of such interest can be found in Naples. Here he purchased the book *Pompei com'era, Pompei com'è* by Luigi Fischietti, that illustrates a reconstruction of the archaeological site (Gresleri, in Gravagnuolo, 1997, p.74)

Jeanneret is attracted by the ability of the ancients to organize, structure and regiment the space (Berritto, 2011). Thus, after just three days in Naples, he organizes a visit to Pompeii that will last three days (October 8-11).

Once in Pompeii, passing through Porta Marina, he reaches the Forum, observing and noting constructive details. His reaches a high position on the Forum, where is opening up a favourable view to read the city from above: *'(...) ordering is the hierarchy of the purpose, walking contemplating this plan is a joy for the spirit. (...) It makes me this effect despite being destroyed. It's like Berlin. I seem to be already on the north'.* (Le Corbusier, 2013, p.154, my own translation)

In Pompeii ruins are still organized in an urban form, accomplishing the ancient fabric. Jeanneret sees these ruins organized by unity, far from the scattered order of the Acropolis Temples. Such rigorous alignments produce him a strong impression, destined to last over time.

He is interested in the space between the masses. Numerous drawings and photos focus on the succession of open spaces, on voids hierarchy and relations with plains. The Carnet IV is full of annotations referring to the relief and the measurement of elements that shape void spaces – *'large', 'vast'*.

Pompeii fabric offers the opportunity to understand dimensions, relations and proportions of the ancient urban landscape, made possible by to direct

measurement as well as by the representations found on Luigi Fischietti book (Gresleri, in Gravagnuolo, 1997, p. 74).

Classic architecture is discovered through its ruins. Jeanneret could understand what is still intelligible, such as *'measures, which are the reason of this beauty'* (Le Corbusier, 1944, p.19, my own translation): these teach him the principles of proportion and organisation, being primary elements to define the plan.

Figure 1. Photo of Pompei (Gresleri in Gravagnuolo, 1997, p. 81)

Pompeii is an open-air museum, where he can learn how was a Roman fabric. Time erased the upper levels of buildings, horizontally sectioning walls, making clear to understand the plan. The structure of *insulae,* constituted by *domus* attached one to each other along a simple urban grid, it's easy to be caught. Jeanneret not only seize the close succession of *domus* but he appreciates the breaths of the fabric, large open spaces for citizens and for meetings. The forum is an open space whose time has consumed the primordial composition. When

seen by Jeanneret, it appears just fenced by diaphragm structures that define his environment, extending up to closed, hermetic curtains of further *domus*.

The Roman city appears clear. Despite time, ruins retain the recognizability of spatial elements. The young architect focuses on three basic ingredients making the morphological structure of the city. In a central perspective, he catches the rigorous and symmetrical road along which the domus are listed (Jeanneret, 1987, Carnet IV p.81), interrupted by a second transversal way, measuring space and expressing the cardo-decumanic structure.

Figure 2. Drawing of C.-E. Jeanneret (1911). *Carnet IV, p. 81*. Via dell'Abbondanza.

Then, in the urban sequence, major axes direct to the *forum* (Jeanneret, 1987, Carnet IV p. 47) centre of the whole fabric. The order of public space organizes the city. Its shape is clear, spatially structured. Time has stripped representative architectures of many emblems, without affecting spatiality. On the contrary: lack of decorations and details makes space emerge more strongly. According to Le Corbusier:

> Order is the hierarchy of purpose, the classification of intentions. The plan of the forum contains many axes, but it will never get a bronze medal at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, it would be rejected, it does not draw a star! Yet it is a joy of the spirit to admire this plant, to walk in the Forum. (Le Corbusier, 2013, p. 153, my own translation)

Finally, Pompeii is the place where it approaches the primitive theme of housing. Through these ruins, he explores the variations of the *domus*: their fascination is once again contemporary, as they are a spatial and typological perfect result. As in urban space, structure degradation heightens the rigor, making emerge spatiality of rooms succession.

Centred on a patio, *domus* is hermetic in its perimeter, ignoring the neighbour and protecting itself from the external world; it overlooks exterior and external view, using just above light. These houses, so intimate and never the same, have spatial structures always structured around a void, with refined and always different solutions. As they were fortresses to enter, the young man with energy starts a meticulous relief, equipped with a meter, a plumb line and a notebook. With these few instruments he records and stores details, in order to develop his thought and his construction of an architectural grammar.

Later he wrote:

> In Pompeii. Once again, the small vestibule takes the road away from your eyes. And here you are the *cavaedium* (*atrium*), four columns in the middle (four cylinders) rise suddenly towards the shadow of the roof, a feeling of strength, evidence of powerful means; but at the end the splendour of the garden, seen through the peristyle which with a wide gesture unfolds this light, distributes it and signals it, extending far to the right and the left, a large space. Between the two, the *tablinium* that encloses this vision as the eyepiece of a camera. On the right, on the left, two small spaces of shade. From the busy street, full of picturesque things, you have entered the house of a Roman. The majestic grandeur, the order, the magnificent magnitude: you are in the house of a Roman. What were these rooms for? It's out of question. After twenty centuries,

> without historical allusions, you will feel architecture, and all this is actually a very small house (Le Corbusier, 2013, p. 149, my own translation).

The transition from the street to the intimate space is emphasized in the description by the annihilation of city noises. Inside, a second degree of intimacy, reserved to private rooms, is built through the filter of the *compluvium*. This is an open passage introducing to the most reserved space in the house: the small, minimal room.

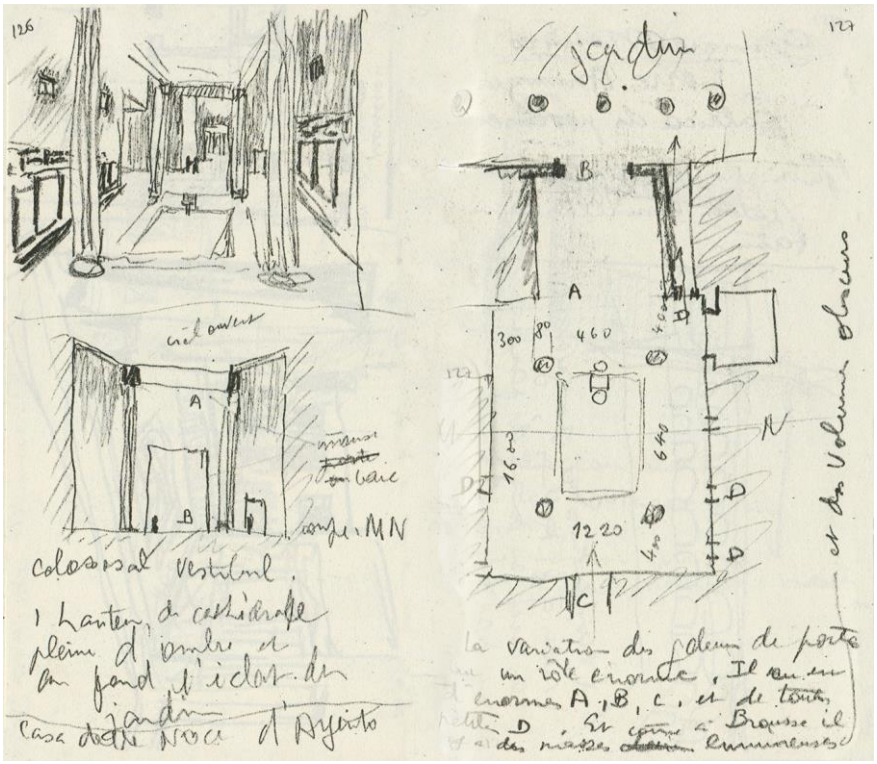

Figure 3. Drawing of C.-E. Jeanneret (1911). *Carnet IV p. 126-127.* Casa del Noce.

House has serenity as a purpose; to ensure this *'Pompeian does not pierce his walls; he has a sacred devotion to the walls, he has a love for light. The light is intense if it is between walls that reflect it. Ancients made walls, walls that stretch and link together to further enlarge the wall. In this way they created volumes, basis of architectural sensation, a sensory sensation'* (Le Corbusier,

2013, p. 150, my own translation). These sensations are also marked by frescoes, which, thanks to natural light, reflect into space the pleasant colours of the thick walls of the domus.

Pompeii after Pompeii

The visit of Pompeii didn't remain just a memory of the *Voyage d'Orient*. The archaeological site was for a long time a *magic box* (Tafuri, 2001, p.84) from which Le Corbusier draw on suggestions for more than forty years towards his architectural production, until the project for Venice in 1963.

The imprinting of the ancient architectures seen in youth would become the incipit for a creative path developed through observation, meditation and drawing, which he later explained by his own words: *'this is the key: watching ... watching / observing / seeing / imagining / inventing / creating'* (Le Corbusier, 1963). This note, written on a Carnet a few years before his death, shows the balance of his method between rationality and sentiment: the six words used represent a postulate that arises from reason, from the real datum, and flows into imagination and invention.

Real characters, extrapolated from the ruins of Classic World, assimilated through drawing, re-emerge manipulated by the unconscious; those constitute his own grammar of sensible forms, as well as the essence of his poetics. Since early projects, *domus* played a fundamental role in Le Corbusier design process: let's mention the link made by Kurt W. Forster, who derives the Maison La Roche plan from the Tragic Poet House in Pompeii; the open-air room in Bestegui Apartement of 1929 echoing (Tafuri, 1984) the Temple of Apollo spatiality (Jeanneret, 1987, Carnet IV p. 26); the empty cube flanked by a cylinder in the Esprit Nouveaux Pavilion of 1925 (Quetglas, in Talamona, 2011, p.90). Relations making clear how Pompeian domus are meaningful for Le Corbusier. This re-emergence process also occurs in mature projects, as in Ronchamp composition, where it takes place a '*hermetic'* space with an '*archaeological flavour'* (Tafuri &

Dal Co, 1976, p. 314) or in the *roman* Chandigarh, shaped by re-emergency of Roman ruins images.

Along with *domus* memories, the spatial structure Roman urban fabric, its density and small proportions of buildings, recur in his writings on urban planning (Le Corbusier, 2011), whilst other principles, current in his practice, as public space dilatation and *pilotis* plan, follow different logics.

Venice needs an urban fabric

Le Corbusier had visited Venice lagoon for the first time on October 1907, at the beginning of his architectural learning. Over time, he came back to the lagoon to build and reinforce his knowledge, as long as the preparation for the project proposal he made for the city in 1963 (Von Moos, in Gravagnuolo, 1977, pp. 85-97).

The new urban plan of Venice requires the construction of a hospital in San Giobbe area. On April 20th, 1963, the public health administration announced a competition for the hospital project. In September of the same year the commission announced winners and there was an exhibition of the projects. Controversial affairs on selected project ends in the direct call of Le Corbusier, who accepts the assignment and receives the necessary documentation for a draft project that would have been presented in subsequent May (Mattioni, in Talamona, 2011, pp. 377-389).

Already in August, Le Corbusier moved to Venice for a first survey in the intervention area. From the beginning, the analysis of Venetian fabric suggests that the new building should be as silent as possible, respecting historical landscape and average heights, and it should be able to absorb the spatial proportions of Venetian streets and squares.

Le Corbusier presents a sketch explaining the correct approach. This arises from an altimetric study of the fabric, and from the statement that San Marco bell

tower should remain the only vertical element, as an emblem of the lagoon landscape.

Venice is a horizontal city, where verticality is made up of exceptions. Buildings lay down on the sea like oil on water, arrange the land available to thicken on stilts. Viewed from the sea, Venice is a unitary block, made of few shadows.

Le Corbusier traces the maximum height of its architecture and fixes it to 13.66 meters. A dimension taken from the altimetric mean as a first input for design.

The horizontality and the homogeneity of the city thus push the project towards a horizontal building: *'Venise la maille de l'hopital (horizontal)'* (Mattioni, in Talamona, 2011, pp. 386). The horizontal grid hospital should be an extension of the urban fabric, as concerned by dimensions and space occupation. Le Corbusier's proposal expands on the lagoon reinterpreting the dynamism of the coast and thinning up to become perceptibly lighter than the 13.66 metres initially declared. A horizontal fabric, devoid of the tortuosity of Venetian roads, based on rectilinear axis which order space and fixe intentions: three levels on a forest of *pilotis* supporting the fabric.

Le Corbusier in this latest project feels the need to overcome the idea of an *unicum*, a unitary building, to embrace a cardo-decumanic system. This fabric, as in Pompeii, find its breath in large public spaces, flooded with natural light as Pompeian *forum*, open to receive Venetians.

A thin, suspended city that clings to the historical one. Far from the pure, isolated volumes, Le Corbusier, to accommodate 58.650 square meters comes back to the images of youth. It disappears the monumentality of last Indian works, as Venice has human, minimal proportions. Venetian *calle* – pedestrian alleys – measure as the corridor of Pompeian houses, 80 cm (Jeanneret, 1987, Carnet IV p. 91): they are small arteries that let the lagoon breathe little by little.

The composition of the plan is clear, the ingredients of Pompeii also revive in the thickness of the building which, like low rise Pompeii ruins, seems to have been thinned by time.

Vertical blocks give access from urban ground floor to the three upper level and lead into internal streets. These are distribution axes of special functions in the first two levels and of hospital stays in the third one. From the first sketch, 10 cores cling around 6 axes. Since the beginning, one core detaches itself from the others, looking for a bigger open space in the complex (Le Corbusier, 2013, Vol. 8 p. 136-141).

The upper plan, dimensionally the most extensive and the most reasoned by the architect, contains a second Roman reference: the *domus* for the sick, a small bed unit of 3x3 meters, is the place where the patient finds '*the best conditions for his staying'* (Reichlin, in Talamona 2011, p.399).

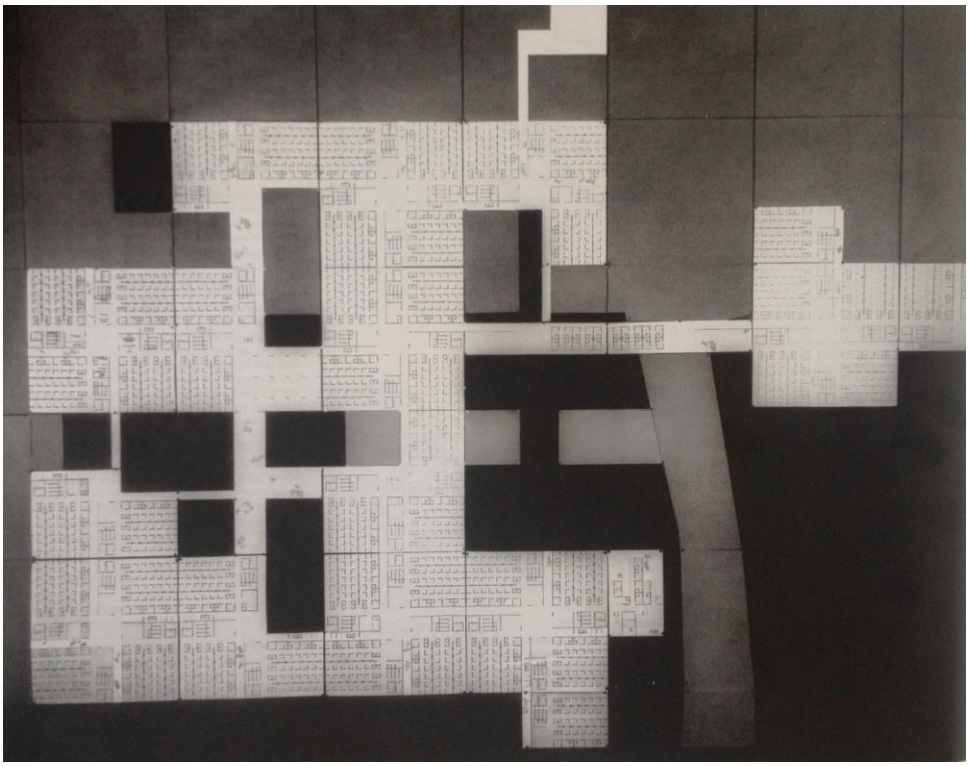

Figure 4. Project for the hospital of Venice (1963). In Le Corbusier (2013). *Œuvre complète Vol. 8 1965-1969*, p. 131. Milan: Hoepli.

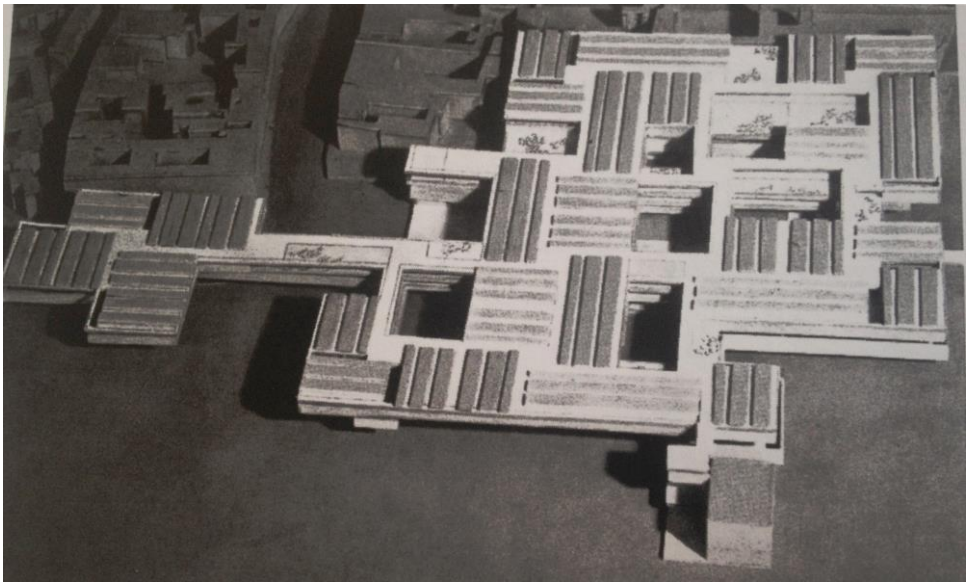

Figure 5. Project for the hospital of Venice (1963). In Le Corbusier (2013). *Œuvre complète Vol. 8 1965-1969*, p. 138. Milan: Hoepli.

According to Le Corbusier, the hospital of the future must challenge intimacy without wasting space. Just like the *'small houses of the Pompeian'* he aims to create a reserved space whilst keeping a direct connection between the rooms. Each patient has his intimacy far from the eyes of his neighbour: rooms are just separated by portions of walls that anyway limit looks and noises.

External wall is a compact involucre without fissures, referring to what he wrote about Pompeiian domus *'The Pompeian does not pierce his walls; he has a sacred devotion to the walls, he has a love for light'*. Rooms light comes from above, it can be mechanically regulated by the patient to set intensity and, in architect prefiguration, it can be enriched by colours through a tilling coloured glass. The suggestion of the Noce House in Pompeii (Jeanneret, 1911, Carnet IV p. 113) seems to be reliving, where upper light caresses the coloured walls of the frescoes giving back chromatic nuances in *'sensory sensations'* (Le Corbusier, 2013, p. 150).

Patient cells are hollow rooms hanging garden above: a public space protected from the wind where the patient can meet people or rest. The domus section evolves into the hollow form of the Roman piers dominated by vegetation,

visited in Tivoli. This retrace a theme already present in previous projects, as his own house in Rue Nungesser et Coli (1933), the Maison de Week End La Cella in Saint Cloud (1935), the Saint Baume complex (1948). Furthermore, other rationalisations of a hollow room were being designed just before the hospital, as L'Usine-Verte, d'Aubusson (1944) or the Olivetti factory in Rho (1963), whose sections seem having influenced Venice patient cells (Reichlin, in Talamona, 2011, p. 390-409).

The discoveries of Pompeii re-emerge over time becoming conceptual and figurative references, bringing again to life timeless archaeology through design. Pompeian suggestions thus become the *City of the Patient* in Venice, made up of *insulae* and *domus* with a careful public space where noises do not harm patients.

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AN EARLY CRITIQUE OF INTERNATIONAL MODERNISM IN THE ANATOLIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

The METU Lodgings Project is located in Ankara, which was established as the Modernist capital of Turkey in 1923. Designed by an architect couple, Altuğ and Behruz Çinici, this unique project reflects with subtle details the "internationality" of its architecture and provides a regional interpretation of Modernity through Anatolian culture. METU Lodgings were designed in pursuit of the idea(l) of Modern City Planning. Due to the adaptation of the concepts developed during the first CIAM meetings in general and the application of the perfect grid as a mediator for site planning in particular, this project can be considered as a distinct product of Modern Architecture. The METU Lodgings are unique not only as an outstanding example of Modern Architecture but also as an early critique of the International Style. The ease in the subtle inclinations of the roofs, the thick brick load bearing walls framing large glass surfaces and the meticulously altered grid of the site layout were a declaration of a unique architecture that was clearly willing to go beyond the "tropes" of Modernism. Therefore, this study focuses on the established demarcation between modern versus traditional, public versus private, transparent versus opaque, pitched versus flat that was later blurred in the competent juxtaposition of these "binary oppositions".

Keywords: Housing, Privacy, Modern Architecture, International Style, Grid

Located in the university campus and surrounded by a planted forest, the METU Lodgings project is a hidden, unique and unusual example of Modern Architecture in Turkey. Designed by an architect couple, Altuğ and Berhuz Çinici, the project reflects with subtle details the "internationality" of its architecture and provides a regional interpretation of Modernity expressed through Turkish architectural culture. In the late 1950s the METU Campus was designed and executed following the idea(l)s of Modern City Planning. Due to the adaptation of the concepts developed during the first CIAM meetings in general and the application of the perfect grid as a mediator for site planning in particular, the campus can

> be considered a distinct product of Modern Architecture.[1] (Savaş, van der Meij, 2018)

With its flat roofs, band windows, exposed concrete and whitewashed surfaces, it represents an emblematic reflection of the 1930s European Modernism learned third-hand from its American predecessors. Its architecture is, in its own particular way, a physical manifestation of everything the International Style claimed to profess.

The METU Lodgings are unique not only as an example of Modern Architecture, but also as an early critique of the International Style. If the early architecture of the campus was a stylistic choice, the METU Lodgings project, developed in the second half of the 1960s, was its daring criticism. This 'project' was a UN - UPENN collaborative enterprise that was purposefully planned to achieve a particular goal. It was initiated under the guidance of a United Nations program in support of training in public administration. On the 5th of September 1951, a legal agreement was signed by the United Nations and the 28-year-old Turkish Government authorizing Charles Abrams (1902-1970) to conduct research on housing and city planning in Turkey. Following his one-year research in Turkey in 1955, Abrams wrote a report suggesting the establishment of a Graduate school for Architecture and City Planning in Ankara. Approved by the government, the Minister of Education put this report into application. (Sargın, Savaş, 2013) Holmes Perkins, the head of the Department of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, was invited to supervise the structural organization of the school, its program and its academic mission. While working on this project, Perkins invited experts such as Thomas Godfrey and Marvin Sevely to teach and administer the school, which was officially established in 1956. While working on the curriculum, these architects started developing different urban schemes and architectural proposals for the design of the future institution. Instead of their proposals, a competition winning project from a young Turkish architect couple was chosen. Nevertheless, the main idea behind the design of the overall campus and the staff housing remained the same. This large-scale

[1] CIAM (*Congrès Internationaux d´Architecture Moderne*) was the name of a series of international conferences on modern architecture and urban planning, organized between 1928 and 1959.

housing project would not only accommodate the university's teaching and administrative staff but also be a 'model' for further housing developments in the country. The intention was for the site to reach the scale of a small town including a primary and a middle school within its premises. Only 28 houses of this original housing project were completed. The academic occupants of the first 18 houses moved in during the summer of 1969. The second stage was completed seven years later. The executed part of the METU housing project was a masterpiece, not only because it was well designed and meticulously built, but also because the architects knew what Modern Architecture was all about, and what a 'home' could not be. The maintenance of the flat roofs and large glass surfaces would be a challenge in Ankara's harsh climate, while appreciating the minimalist Modernist interiors, white plaster surfaces, glass brick separators, and exposed concrete walls would be rather difficult for the university staff coming from different nationalities, backgrounds and age groups.

The first impression of the METU Lodgings is that the project was brilliantly misplaced. If nothing else, the houses look very "domestic" compared to the rather "brute-cubist" architecture of the rest of the campus. At first glance, they are pitched roof, red brick, North European row houses. A formal analysis, however, indicates otherwise and shows that the architects were clearly refusing such valiant or easy references. An exploration of the conditions that led to the design and construction of the academic housing at the METU campus shows that they are unique in their land organization, architectural design, and material details. The 'Row house' as a housing type evokes either the 19th century worker's cottages or the emerging petit bourgeois neighbourhoods in industrialized countries. Marginalized during the Industrial Revolution and still a developing country, Turkey has no precedents of this type. The local people in Anatolia first lived in traditional houses that were developed according to the local values of the different regions, then moved to single standing five storey apartment blocks. As a result, the local people saw very few examples of row houses. Therefore, while the METU Lodgings are composed of linearly attached cubical units, yet it is not possible to call them 'row houses' in the conventional

sense of the term. They represent distinctive properties that could only be conceptualized in their geographical and historical settings.

The construction of these houses started in August of 1968 and when they were completed a year later, they were the only man-made objects in the vicinity. The site selected for their construction was bare land, with almost no sign of spatial identity, which could be interpreted as the ideal ground, (a zero point/*tabula rasa*) for the flourishing of a 'new' architecture. Indeed, the 1/5000 scale site plan of the campus presents an abstract, 'rational' order guided by invisible orthogonal guide lines, a grid of which there are traces left particularly in the housing. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. The 1/5000 scale site plan of the METU Campus with the orthogonal grid indicated around the housing clusters. *Salt Research, Altuğ-Behruz Çinici Archive*

The abstract curves of the topography lines, the indication of educational and dwelling units with rectangular prisms, the sharp corners of the traffic roads and pedestrian paths suggest a strong aspiration for Modernism. Among other modes of architectural representation, Çinici Architects favoured the orthographic set to

express and communicate their ideas. Architectural historiography has long been established on the assumption that drawings are the primary referent for the interpretation of the architects' intentions. Besides being projections to create images for the future buildings, they have been interpreted as documents giving historical information. (Evans, 1997) This rather technical mode of representation has been identified with Modern Architecture to exceed its practical medium of implementation. The inherent neutrality, or in better terms, 'objectivity' of this mode has been interpreted in different ways. (Türkay, 2011) In this particular case, the hand drawn orthographic set that includes the plan, section and elevation drawings has been conceived as the main source of information to understand the material and aesthetic choices made by the architects. Indeed, their intentions can be traced in the line quality, hatching technique, locations of the section lines, depiction of different materials and particularly in the drawing notes. The terminology used to describe certain architectural elements and the hand-written notes on the drawings are also evidence of the architects' intentions to challenge the abstract mapping of the 'site plan'. The campus plan was divided into functional zones based on the design decisions given in a bubble diagram. (Figure 2)

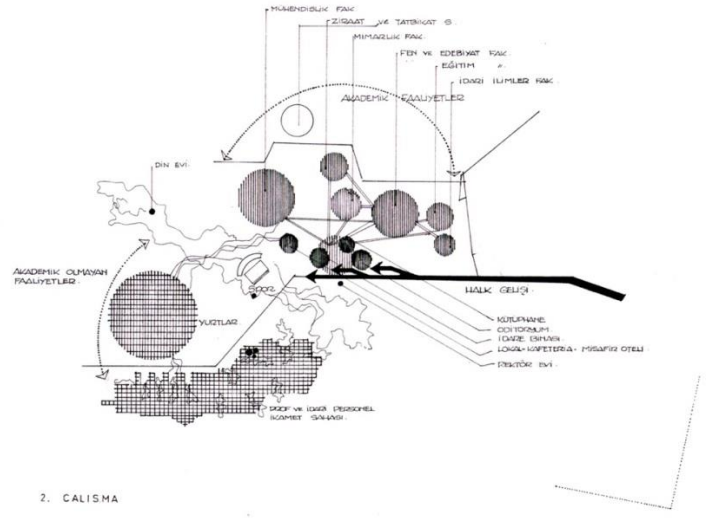

Figure 2. The bubble diagram of the campus plan, divided into functional zones, based on the walking distances between the different functions. *Salt Research, Altuğ-Behruz Çinici Archive*

Educational units, administrative buildings, sports facilities, dormitories and staff housing were located based on the walking distances between these different functions. Yet, in fact, the site was not at all flat and retained a very complex topography. (Figure 3)

Figure 3. General view of the houses and the transformation of the landscape

Placing the linear clusters of 'L' shaped dwelling units on this topography was the first step taken towards the strong sense of belonging to the land, responding to the 'context'.[2] In contrast to the two-dimensional mapping of the site plan, the section drawings illustrate the three-dimensional organization of the houses on the site that was mainly due to the sharp level differences in the south-north direction and the smooth slope of the topography inclining towards the west. Each unit was placed in relation to the other, according to the orientation towards the sun, and the formation of the land. The meticulous placement of

[2] 'L shape plan', from an interview with Aydan Balamir in 2016, Ankara.

housing units on the site and the slight protrusions and recessions they make, generated zigzag patterns, which helped create semi-private gardens and courtyards to make these houses almost 'site-specific'. Moreover, the architects borrowed terms from traditional architecture to label these well-defined open spaces as '*taşlık'* or '*avlu*', which mean paved courtyard and yard in English.[3] In traditional architecture, local and climatic conditions including local materials and construction techniques helped the formation of these courtyards. Household privacy required a hierarchical organization of spaces from the street to the entrance. Using traditional terminology to name these semi-private yards '*taşlık'* created a duality. That is to say that the land itself, with its material and symbolic characteristics was creating a 'context', and as such, becoming one of the main sources of inspiration for the architects. (Bozdoğan, 2001)

Figure 4. The east façade of the houses

A close analysis of the drawings of the east and west façades of the houses presents another set of dichotomies. The east façade is illustrated with large

[3] From an interview with Altuğ and Behruz Çinici in 2006, Ankara.

glass openings to allow the morning sun to penetrate into the bedrooms in the morning and narrow band windows to provide light and privacy to the bathroom. The exposed concrete balustrade and the ceiling project from the white plaster surface of this exterior wall to form a balcony. (Figure 4)

What challenges this otherwise highly Modernist approach is the application of the dark brown wooden elements that are used to frame and thus to divide the band windows into equal parts. Timber frame and infill is a traditional construction technique in Turkey. Yet half of this exterior wall flows in the air and acts like a bridge to reject the load bearing quality of the lath and plaster wall-making system known as '*bağdadi*' in Turkish. As the exposed concrete floor of the master bedroom is the main load bearing element, the timber framing remains as an ornament cladded on the surface of the white plaster wall. *Kafes* is another local term used by the architects to refer to the wooden mesh inspired by traditional residential architecture. Rather than acting as a *brise soleil*, this wooden lattice is used to provide visual privacy, an influence from the conventions of earlier houses remaining in Anatolia.

In contrast with the whitewashed and exposed concrete surface of the east façade, the west façade is made out of brick and mortar. Moreover, the dark brown timber frames, wide eaves, and particularly the exposed rafters under these eaves, all emphasise the existence of an overall guidance of traditional elements in the architects' unique approach. Therefore, the contrast between the east and west façades is an indication of not only a strong sense of sun orientation and functional alteration, but also the aesthetic choices of the architects. The main architectural element on this façade, a relatively large bay window ornamented with traditional brick and wooden corbelling, is further evidence of this contextual attitude. The bay window, or '*cumba*' as it is called in Anatolia, protrudes towards the streets from the main façades of the traditional houses. While increasing the amount of natural light, it also provides an in-between space between the outside and inside to adjust the domestic privacy.

A very subtle juxtaposition of the familiar elements of Modern Architecture with regional motives is epitomised in the design of a little balcony on the upper floor

of the west façade. Inspired by the dimensions and the materials of its Modern precedents, this balcony is made out of a thick exposed concrete slab projecting from the white painted flat surface of the exterior wall. However, the detail drawings of this balcony show that the architects thought of veiling its front façade with another wooden lattice. As the balcony was very small and located on the first floor, the use of *kafes* here was for more symbolic reasons than functional requirements of privacy. In a similar manner, the inclined roofing on the top suggested another juxtaposition of binary oppositions, pitched versus flat, public versus private, traditional versus Modern.

Finishing the north façade with a homogenous yellow brick wall yet making the south façade transparent with large glass sliding doors is another contrast created by the architects. Brick is a local material used extensively in Anatolia. Yellow, on the other hand, is quite an unusual colour for this region. Another unusual aspect of this façade is the decoration of each brick with vertical flutes. These flutes alternate on the wall to produce almost an ornamented surface. The south façade contains the main entrance door and the sliding openings of the living room. The angle brackets at the corners of the large glass surfaces of the sliding doors, the very narrow, yellow and textured band window placed perpendicular to them, the entrance door made out of wood and reinforced glass, the cast iron lighting fixture and the wooden mail box, they all react to the otherwise minimalist approach presented on this flat surface.

The inclination of the roof towards east and west, reads more like a break and a tilt of a flat surface, rather than a traditional pitched roof. In the interior of the house, the breaking point of the roof marks the coexistence of two different design approaches. Above the living room, the inclined surface is visible and creates a double storey ceiling, ornamented with load bearing timber elements painted dark brown and white. Above the kitchen, bedrooms and the bathroom, it transforms into a white washed flat surface. Thus, the roof divides the interior into two distinctive parts. One step level difference between the living and dining rooms enhances this division of space. Otherwise, the house is a perfect example of an ‘open plan’ scheme. Spaces flow into one another without any visual or physical obstacle. The large glass surfaces and openings on the east,

west and south façades blur the borders between the inside and outside, private and public. Only the interior surface of the north façade contradicts this transparency. The homogeneous brick surface duplicates itself in the interior and expends to the dining room wall with a wooden wainscoting. The detail drawing of this interior façade illustrates a set of wooden built-in furniture that was never built yet requires further analysis. (Figure 5)

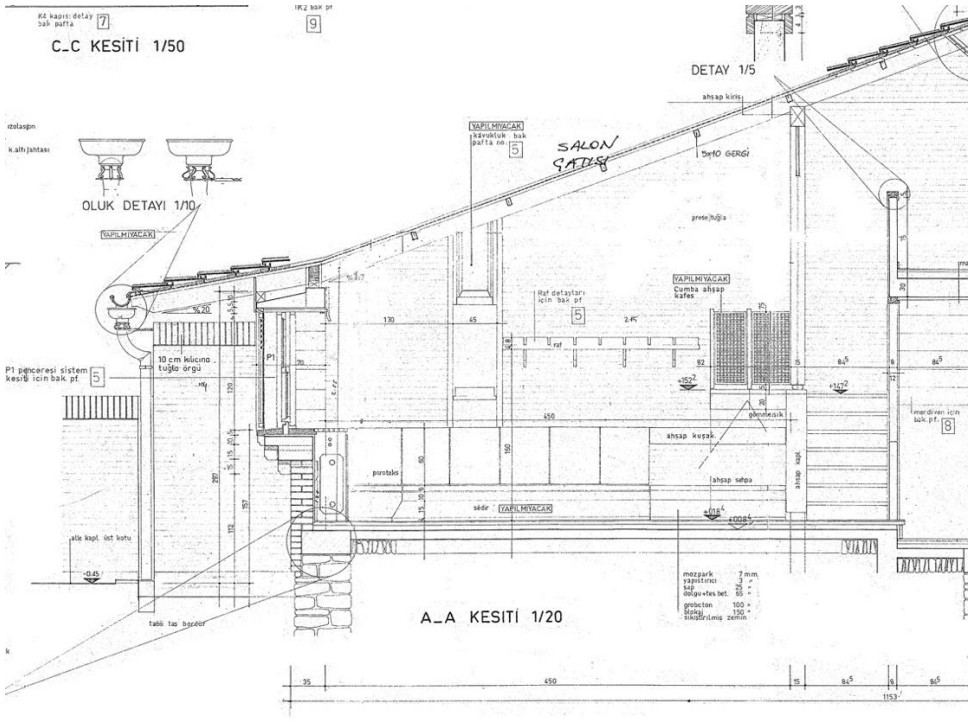

Figure 5. The detailed drawing of the interior façade illustrating the locations of the traditional architectural elements: *kavukluk*, *sedir*, *cumba* and *kafes*. *METU, Altuğ-Behruz Çinici Archive*

Starting from the left, '*kavukluk*', '*sedir*', '*cumba*' and '*kafes*' refer to four traditional household items, which are very unusual to find in a modern house in the 1960s. *Kavukluk* is an ornamented shelf installed on the walls to hold the *turban*, which used to be the traditional headdress in the Ottoman period. A *Sedir* is traditional long and soft seat with a back and usually arms, and *cumba* and *kafes* in this case refer to the landing of the staircase protruding towards

the living room. The project note indicating the fact that 'they were not meant to be built' leaves their architectural interpretation incomplete and their functional adjustments unknown. The square sectioned single column placed meticulously on a sphere, on the other hand, is the only built evidence of this enigmatic approach. It is hard to find the traces of a two-dimensional capital and spherical base in the traditional architecture of the region. As it is not visible and the detail drawings do not give any clue about its construction details, the way this column transfers the load from roof to the ground remains another mystery.

Neither the meticulous architectural drawings nor the later explanations of the architects in various interviews are sufficient enough to understand the real motives behind the proposal of the traditional elements in these Modern houses. The success of an architectural project is measured in terms of material qualities, user satisfaction and the efficiency of its infrastructural facilities; however, the METU Lodgings project was deemed important for another reason, being anticipated to become a model for similar "Modernist" undertakings in the region in the future. Due to the adaptation of the concepts developed during the first CIAM meetings in general and the application the perfect grid as a mediator for site planning in particular, the campus can be considered a distinct product of Modern Architecture. This project was designed and executed following the idea(l)s of Modern city planning and urban design defined in CIAM and has been considered a successful Modernist project and achievement in experimental planning history. The houses, on the other hand, are exceptional not only as a very successful example of Modern Architecture, but also as an early critique of the International Style. The ease in the subtle inclinations of the roofs, the thick brick load bearing walls framing large glass surfaces and the meticulously altered grid of the site layout were a declaration of a unique architecture that was clearly willing to go beyond the "tropes" of Modernism. (Goldhagen, 2005) The established demarcation between modern versus traditional, public versus private, transparent versus opaque, pitched versus flat was blurred in the competent juxtaposition of these "binary oppositions".

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This paper developed from a research conducted with Agnes van der Meij between the years 2013 and 2016 on Nagele archives in the Netherlands.

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DISSEMINATING THE REGIONAL WITHIN THE GLOBAL
Representing Regionalist Ideas and the Global Scale of the Modern Movement in the Hungarian Journal *Tér és Forma*

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Abstract

The pursuit of a national style has engaged Hungarian architects ever since the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and such tendencies prevailed even in the interwar period when the Modern Movement emerged. A magazine editor represented an alternative standpoint rejecting style architecture, formalism and historicism and, using his voice and platform, propagated the Modern Movement in accordance with his regionalist views. This was the architect Virgil Bierbauer (1893–1956), who edited the journal Tér és Forma *(Space and Form), the leading architectural periodical of interwar Hungary between 1928 and 1942.*

Bierbauer did not only deny historicism but also the notion of a unifying international style as he insisted on regional solutions based on the local climate and building materials. While he was a firm advocate of the Modern Movement, he provided a broad panorama of contemporary architecture from a global scale focusing on the local relevance of his selection in Tér és Forma*. He was also deeply interested in vernacular architecture. He eagerly observed rural buildings during his travels within Hungary and abroad and he dedicated articles and complete journal issues to this subject. Bierbauer also insisted on the elevation of this topic into the international discourse in the framework of CIAM-Ost, the Eastern European organization for the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne.*

In my paper, I focus on the common grounds Bierbauer found between modern and vernacular architecture and how it was presented in the journal Tér és Forma*. In my case studies, vernacular architecture represents functionalism, simplicity and dedication to life, which Bierbauer – similarly to many of his contemporaries – compared to modern architecture. I trace both Hungarian and international examples to articulate Bierbauer's interpretations. In addition to* Tér és Forma *as a source material, I use Bierbauer's correspondence, travel reports, original manuscripts and photographs held at the Hungarian Museum of Architecture.*

Keywords: Virgil Bierbauer (1893–1956), periodical press, interwar Hungary, modern architecture, the Hungarian peasant house

Introduction

The quest for a national style had been a prevailing concept ever since the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy when – despite Hungary's relative independence dated from the 1867 Compromise – Hungarian architects aspired to define an

architecture sought to be distinctive and national. At the turn of the century, Ödön Lechner (1845–1914) and his followers, as well as a generation-younger Károly Kós (1883–1977) – though in a different spirit – turned to folk art and architecture as a source material to define a national style in Hungarian architecture. After the fall of the Empire in World War I and the 1920 Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost ca. 70% of its territory and ca. 60% of its population. Owing to this significant deprivation in territory, economy, human and natural resources, Hungarians tended to cherish the greater past of the nation and thus, the aftermath of the war witnessed a severe conservativism in general as well as in architecture, considering especially State- and Church-owned commissions. Some architects such as Gyula Sándy pursued national style in the so-called crenellated Renaissance characteristic of the north-east of historic Hungary, while others, like István Medgyaszay, found the sources in Eastern cultures that were thought to be related to the Hungarians. Historicist styles also prevailed, and the Neo-Baroque became the dominant style of the 1920s. At the same time, a younger generation of architects became responsive to progressive tendencies in art and architecture. Studying in Western Europe, taking study trips, participating in international events and reading foreign publications, a significant number of young architects started to share a disdain for Historicism in favour of the *new architecture*. They generally appreciated technological progress and the new modern lifestyle and they also tried to respond to social problems.

In spite of the numerous connotations labelled *international*, the Modern Movement in architecture was many times fuelled by *regionalist* ambitions. A prominent architect in interwar Hungary represented this path, as he not only rejected Historicism and style architecture per se, but he also objected the term *international style* in accordance with his beliefs in the derivation of architecture from the local climate and building materials. This was the architect Virgil Bierbauer (also known as Virgil Borbíró, 1893–1956),[1] whose position was of foremost importance, since he represented a leading voice as the editor of the journal *Tér és Forma* (*Space and Form*), the most influential architectural

[1] Virgil Bierbauer's editorial work can be considered one of his chef-d'oeuvre, while his architectural projects are equally important, especially his long-term project for the extension of Kelenföld Power Plant in Budapest (1925–1934) and Budaörs Airport (1936–1937), which he co-designed with László Králik.

periodical in interwar Hungary.[2] The journal contributed to the promotion of the Modern Movement to a great extent and fostered especially the implementation of the ideas of the new architecture in Hungary. Bierbauer edited the monthly magazine for fifteen years between 1928 and 1942, and he also wrote a considerable number of essays, polemics, travel reports and publication reviews for the journal. During the first years of *Tér és Forma*, the architect János Komor acted as co-editor, but after his resignation in 1931, it was Bierbauer who shaped the message of the magazine essentially. Bierbauer's core principle permeated the content of the journal during the fifteen years of his editorship and reappeared in many different topics. He was convinced that contemporary architecture had to be originated from the everyday life of the inhabitants, function and the environment. In this paper, Bierbauer's above-mentioned tenets are interpreted in the context of his ideas about modernity and the vernacular on the basis of his travels, professional connections and activities as a cultural mediator in the international architectural scene.

The main sources of this paper consist of the textual and photographic material published in *Tér és Forma* including several essays written by Bierbauer himself. The mechanisms of the editorial processes and the dynamic of Bierbauer's professional network can be scrutinised via his correspondence of ca. 900 letters, which are related to his professional work; the comprehensive but not completely intact correspondence that represents Bierbauer's global network is now held at the Hungarian Museum of Architecture in the context of the Virgil Bierbauer archive.[3] Bierbauer's estate also comprises a significant photographic material incorporating the architectural photographs representing Bierbauer's oeuvre as an architect, the photographs taken by Bierbauer during his travels as well as family photographs.

[2] The history and impact of the journal *Tér és Forma* are the subject of a thorough study written by Pál Ritoók and Ágnes Anna Sebestyén, which will be published in *Docomomo Journal* no. 59 in 2018.

[3] The author of this paper completed a comprehensive research into Virgil Bierbauer's correspondence of ca. 900 letters related to his professional work as an architect and editor. The research project was funded by the National Cultural Fund of Hungary (ref. no. 101102/00444).

Early Encounters with Regionalist Ideas

Virgil Bierbauer was born in a family of architects and engineers, his father, István Bierbauer was the chief director of engineering at the Royal Hungarian Post and thus Virgil had an insight into the latest architectural publications from an early age. He studied at the Technical University of Munich between 1911 and 1915 and he also attended the art history lectures of Joseph Popp, Heinrich Wölfflin and Fritz Burger. He obtained his doctorate in 1920 with his dissertation entitled *Bramante und die ersten Plane für Sankt Peter in Rom*. His deep interest in architectural history and theory dated back to these years and prevailed during his entire career. Thus, in addition to his numerous articles about contemporary architecture, he dedicated several essays to architectural history including not only the historical styles but also vernacular architecture. His studies culminated in his comprehensive book *The History of Hungarian Architecture*, which he published in 1937 (Bierbauer, 1937a), as well as in his manuscript entitled *The Comparative Study of the Hungarian House* from the 1940s. (Borbíró, 2003)

Figure 1. Virgil Bierbauer's photograph of the Piazza Vecchia in Bergamo. Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture and Monument Protection Documentation Center – HMA

Bierbauer eagerly collected contemporary publications from an early age and later as a magazine editor he was in the fortunate position to receive numerous copies to be reviewed in his journal. In addition to gaining information from publications from all over the world, Bierbauer was an avid traveller, although his travels were only limited to European countries such as Italy, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland and Czechoslovakia.[4] Preceding his career as an editor, he took study trips to Italy, which remained his favoured destination during the 1930s. He equally visited historical sites, vernacular architecture and modern buildings as it can be scrutinized in his publications and his photographs. His trips can be traced in his published travel reports in different Hungarian publications as well as in the memoir of his wife, Adrienne Graul (1896–1973) entitled *Bottle Post*.[5] In 1927, Bierbauer took a trip to the Netherlands and Germany, which had a lasting influence on his thinking about modern architecture and its regionalist connotations. The main reason of his travel was the congress of the Comité Permanent International des Architectes (CPIA) held in the Hague and Amsterdam, and on his way there and back Bierbauer stopped at several German cities including Hamburg and Stuttgart. In addition to the visit at the Weissenhof Housing Estate (1927) and J.J.P. Oud's housing in Oud-Mathenesse, Rotterdam (1922–1923), Willem Marinus Dudok's school buildings in Hilversum and Fritz Höger's Expressionist brick architecture in Hamburg took the longest-lasting influence on Bierbauer's theoretical thinking. Bierbauer was in contact with both Dudok and Höger for several years and also had the chance to meet them personally in 1927 as well as during a trip in 1931.[6] It was especially the local relevance of both architects'

[4] The author of this paper has an ongoing research project about Virgil Bierbauer's travels highlighting the impact of travelling on his editorial and architectural work. The research project is funded by the National Cultural Fund of Hungary (ref. no. 101102/00578). For more on Virgil Bierbauer's travels, see Sebestyén, 2017.

[5] Adrienne Graul was deeply involved in Bierbauer's professional life as his secretary and translator managing Bierbauer's correspondence in different languages. She was also the manager of Bierbauer's bequest after her husband's death and thus several archival materials now held in the Hungarian Museum of Architecture bear Graul's commentaries. Her memoir entitled *Palackposta* (*Bottle Post*) was written between 1958 and 1972 and aside from its highly biased narrative it contains essential information about Bierbauer's work and personal life. A copy of this unpublished manuscript is now held in the Virgil Bierbauer archive of the Hungarian Museum of Architecture.

[6] Bierbauer's correspondence contains letters exchanged between Bierbauer and Dudok dated to the period between 1928 and 1937 (D 24 – D 26, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture); regarding Höger, the letters that survived are dated to 1926–1932 (H 39 – H 56, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture).

oeuvre that engaged Bierbauer's attention such as Höger's usage of brick as a local building material, a conviction that he promoted in the pages of *Tér és Forma* in the following years. The chance for networking at the CPIA conference, the several sites he visited and all the ideas he encountered proved to be essential during his editorship of the monthly magazine launched in the following year.

Experiencing regionalist ideas was of course not restricted to the international scene as similar quests can be traced in Hungary at the time. Beside the highly influential Károly Kós who studied the Hungarian rural houses in Transylvania, surveys executed in order to document the Hungarian peasant house decades before Bierbauer touched upon this subject. Notable surveys were authored by Róbert Kertész K. and Gyula Sváb, which were published under the title *The Hungarian Peasant House* by the Union of Hungarian Engineers and Architects in 1908. In the 1910s, Kertész and Sváb, as the managers of the Technical Department of the Cultural Ministry launched a programme to build schools in the rural areas of Hungary. The programme proved to be noteworthy as it was required to use local building materials and correspond with the built environment of the neighbourhood as it was highlighted by Iván Kotsis, one of the architects of this programme. (Kotsis, 2010, pp. 30–32.) Although the programme had not become a reference point for Bierbauer and it certainly differed from the ways Bierbauer appropriated vernacular architecture, it can be considered a notable phenomenon that immediately preceded Bierbauer's work. There was also the architect Iván Kotsis, who remained a constant figure on Bierbauer's horizon as a leading architect who shaped the architecture of the region of Lake Balaton in the interwar period.

Kotsis's regionalist ideas became prevalent in *Tér és Forma* from the beginning of the magazine, even more so as Kotsis turned from Eclecticism towards the new architecture around 1928, the year of the launch of *Tér és Forma*. Kotsis echoed the modernist belief in functionalism and at the same time its regionalist overtones, which materialised in his building activities around Lake Balaton. In 1931, the Union of Hungarian Engineers and Architects held a series of lectures about the economic, health and architectural problems of the Balaton region. The outcomes of the meetings and thirty modern summer houses were published in

the 2nd issue of *Tér és Forma* in 1931, and in 1932, a thematic issue (issue no. 5–6) was dedicated to the lectures given at the symposium including Iván Kotsis's talk. (Kotsis, 1932) Kotsis designed types for summer houses taking into consideration the local climate around Lake Balaton and the everyday activities of vacationers. He proposed simple, standardized and minimal dwellings, which served the basic activities during a summer holiday. His types of housing represented an economic solution for middle-class clients, who could not afford costly solutions. These houses represented a new vernacular perfectly in line with Bierbauer's ideas about the modern architect's role that was, according to Bierbauer, the service of a given task, which should outperform architects' individual ambitions. These two thematic issues of *Tér és Forma* illustrate the essence of Bierbauer's intentions about how regionalist ideas needed to be distributed in order to be implemented in the countryside of interwar Hungary. The proposals for the region of Lake Balaton intended to be exemplary and its importance could be easily emphasised due to the importance of the region in the country's economy and tourism.

Figure 2. The cover of the February 1931 issue of *Tér és Forma* including thirty modern summer houses designed for the region of Lake Balaton. The cover features Károly Weichinger's design.

Bierbauer's early regionalist concerns with Lake Balaton were testified by even an international example, when he made a hint to the vernacular while featuring Villa Flora, the Aaltos' summer house by Lake Alajärvi.[7] In his short essay, Bierbauer compared this very simple weekend house, which was designed by Aino Marsio-Aalto in 1926, to the local vernacular architecture saying *'[The house] is Finnish in the same way as the houses of the Finnish peasants are Finnish.'* (Bierbauer, 1929, p. 312.) In continuation, Bierbauer urged to build in the same spirit around Lake Balaton, where by appropriating such architectural ideas it would have been possible to construct adequate and inexpensive summer houses.

Representing Hungarian Vernacular Architecture in Relevance to the Modern Movement

In 1929, Bierbauer dedicated a complete issue (no. 1, *Tér és Forma*) to the vernacular architecture of Hungary and several other essays appeared in the journal especially in the late 1930s–early 1940s. The articles around 1930 were authored by, for instance, Károly Kós and Ede Toroczkai Wigand, both of whom had become the renowned figures of ethnographic studies in architecture by this time. In these essays, Toroczkai Wigand examined the origin and development of the Hungarian peasant house (Toroczkai Wigand, 1929), while Kós focused his attention to the peasant house of Transylvania (Kós, 1929). These studies represent a research-oriented standpoint without direct references to modern architecture. A younger architect of Bierbauer's generation, Jenő Padányi Gulyás (1900–1982) was at the forefront of surveying the vernacular architecture of rural Hungary along with his colleagues such as László Miskolczy and Kálmán Tóth. As an architect and researcher as well as an author and a subject of study, Padányi Gulyás regularly appeared in the pages of *Tér és Forma*. In a review of one of Padányi Gulyás's summer houses, Bierbauer compared the house to the

[7] Only four letters remained in Bierbauer's correspondence, which document the connection between Bierbauer and Alvar Aalto, dated to the period between 1929 and ca. 1932–1933 (A 1 – A 4, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture). Two of these letters concern the publication of Villa Flora in *Tér és Forma*, see Erling Bjertnaes's, Aalto's assistant's two letters to Virgil Bierbauer, 9 and 12 July 1929, A 1, A 2, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture.

Hungarian peasant house in terms of both function and form. (Bierbauer, 1939a) According to Bierbauer, Padányi Gulyás followed function and conformed to the local climate and thus he reached similar formal solutions as the anonymous maker of a vernacular house, such as the shady patio and the unadorned whitewashed facades. Bierbauer's appraisal was at the same time the acknowledgement of Padányi Gulyás's and his colleagues' work in surveying and thus understanding vernacular architecture. It echoes Bierbauer's editorial of 1937, in which he states that appropriate building activity in the countryside can only be executed if contemporary architects perform a thorough study in order to truly understand the given region's local building materials, structures as well as the peasants' past, thinking and current life. (Bierbauer, 1937b) In this editorial, Bierbauer self-critically expressed his journal's omission in representing the countryside in the same extent as the urbanized areas. At the same time, Bierbauer pointed out that without acceptable building activities in rural regions it was impossible to give more coverage to this topic. Moreover, he urged the execution of comprehensive surveys and studies, which he consciously featured in a greater number from 1937.

Bierbauer, however, did not accept the status quo but tried to add to the shared scholarly knowledge about the Hungarian peasant house. His goal was to deeply understand the vernacular in order to give relevant answers to the current problems of rural areas. He studied the origins and the development of the peasant house, its typology, space, architectural elements and, due to his comparative method, he expanded his scope to the houses of other peoples and regions such as the Germans, the Scandinavians and the Mediterranean. In addition to producing an elaborate written material, Bierbauer took numerous photographs during his work. Although Bierbauer performed his study with the utmost attention and scholarly ambition, his texts now considered notable due to their documentary value with regards to his theoretical thinking. (Fehérvári & Prakfalvi, 2003, p. 10.) His work led towards the above-mentioned manuscript entitled *The Comparative Study of the Hungarian House* with initial passages published in *Tér és Forma* in 1940 (Bierbauer, 1940a; Bierbauer, 1940b). The first version of the manuscript that was considered final by Bierbauer is dated to 1948 and it was followed by a few altered versions, but all of them remained

unpublished during Bierbauer's life. It was the 1948-version that was finally published in 2003 by the Hungarian Museum of Architecture (Borbíró, 2003).

Tornác Bélapátfalván Foto: Bierbauer

dani, hogy alig van nép, amely ma vagy egykoron a fejlődésnek egy korábbi vagy későbbi fokán ne épített volna fedett, pillérekkel vagy oszlopokkal alátámasztott nyitott előteret — magyarul tornácot — háza, már egysejtű ősháza előtt. A görög megaronháznak jellemzője az oromalatti, pillérszegte, esetleg középoszlopos előcsarnok, s ugyanez jellemzi az északgermán ősházat is, de ma is élőformája a papilléres „Laube" formájában az észak-kelet-németországi paraszthánaknak. Viszont a ház ereszoldalán, tehát hosszoldalán végigvonuló tornácot megtaláljuk Kínától Irakig és Iránig, végig egész Közép- és Délnyugat-Ázsián, még pedig a történelem előtti időktől napjainkig, megtaláljuk azt a történelmi Magyarország egész területén, de tiszta hosszanti formában csak a magyarlakta tájakon. Ugyanis, amikor a szlávok tornácos házat építettek, — szinte kizárólagosan favázas szerkezettel, falábakkal, — vagy ahol a szláv szokások befolyásolták más népek építését, a hosszanti tornác úgyszólván mindig reákanyarodik az oromoldalra. És én úgy látom, épp ez adja meg a kérdés kulcsát.

Két különböző dolog az oromalatti tornác, — „Laube" — és az ereszalatti tornác. Az egyik az orom alatti bejáratú ház természetes jellegzetessége, a másik a hosszoldalai bejáratú háznak tulajdonsága. Itt ágazik kétfelé az európai háztípus, — amint azt e tanulmány előző részében kifejtettem: a mélységi és a hosszú ház-típusra és egy közbenső keveréktípus az, amelynél az eresz alatt van ugyan a bejárat, de a tornác kifordul az orom alá.[1]

Idáig jutva úgy tetszik, hogy most már világosan körülírhatjuk a magyar ház tornácát, illetve egy összehasonlítás révén kiismerhetjük annak építőművészeti jelentőségét.

A magyar ház tornáca tehát a háznak hosszú oldalára, az eresz alá, a ház bejárata elé került, mondhatnók a pitvar ajtaja előtt egy jobbra és balra szerteszőkő tér alakult ki a ház zárt részei előtt. Ilyenformán a háznak az ereszvonal meghatározta síkján belül épül meg. A tornác és a zárt helyiség tömegét az egyszerű, — egyes esetekben a lekontyolt nyeregtető — foglalja tiszta stereometriai egységekbe. Ez a téralakítás egyszerűségében logikus, épp olyan logikus, mint amikor a meghosszabbított nyeregtető egyik oromfelőli vége alá kerül az előcsarnok, a Laube.

[1] Teljesség kedvéért megemlítem még azt is, hogy a germán népeknél elég gyakori az emeleten épített eresz-alatti tornác, akár abban a formában, hogy az emeleti szobák keskenyebbek — Skandináviában — s ezek elé, de a ház zárt homlokzati síkja mögé kerül a hosszanti tornác, akár abban az alakban, hogy az eresz alatti tornác erkélyszerűen kiugrik a ház földszinti falsíkja elé. Ezek a formák paraszti eszközökkel és szerkezetekkel csak ott valósíthatók meg, ahol a ház, vagy legalább annak felső része fából épült.

A ház felé haladó ember itt vagy a tornácra, vagy az előcsarnokra pillant reá.

Élesen különbözik e formáktól a szláv forma, amely egyesíteni igyekszik magában a téralakításban e két merőben ellentétes útját: az orom alatti előcsarnokot, mint az eresz alatti tornácot egyaránt alkalmazza és ezáltal sem az egyik, sem a másik alaknak tiszta logikáját nem érvényesítheti.[2]

Érdemes a kérdést az életszokások fényében is megvizsgálni. Az építő magyar nem fordítja a tornácot az utca felé, mert az a tornác élettér, amelyben tesz, vesz, dolgozik, — nem akarja pedig azt, hogy az életét az útfelől figyeljék. A szláv viszont a tornácot az utca felőli orom oldalon is alkalmazza, talán csak azért, hogy épületének ezt a felét is díszesebbé tegye. Ezáltal azonban az orom alatti és a hosszanti tornácrészeknek értelme kétféle lesz, s ezért házából hiányzik az az építészeti logika, amely a magyarság tornácos házának, vagy a germán „Laube"-s háznak sajátja.

Így látván most már a különbségeket, Bünker 45 évvel ezelőtt elhangzott és a magyar háztudományt erősen befolyásoló, a tornáctól megfosztó felfogásával is szembehelyezkedhetünk. Elfogadhatjuk azt, hogy a tornác sajátja a történelmi Magyarország számos, csaknem minden tája házának. A tornác, mint olyan, nem egy faj kizárólagos építőszokása, hanem egy tág kultúrájé. De viszont a tornác alakításának mikéntjében lényeges különbségek mutatkoznak, ame-

[2] Azt lehetne mondani, hogy a görög peristyliumos templom is alkalmazta az orom alatti és az eresz alatti hossz-oldali oszlopsort. Csakhogy a görög templomnak mind a négy oldalán körüllut az oszlopcsarnok, és a templomnak egész belső testét, celláját körülövezi, tehát egységes oszlopcsarnok hatásra törekszik, a zárt, tömör falat mintegy elrejti, s egyúttal oszlopokra, oszlopsorokra oldja fel az épülettest egészét.

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Figure 3. Virgil Bierbauer's study on the Hungarian house with his photograph of a patio in Bélapátfalva. Bierbauer, V. (1940b). Szempontok a magyar házkutatáshoz (Aspects of the Study of the Hungarian House). *Tér és Forma, 13*(12), 225.

In addition to his concentrated work to improve the local state of research and implementation, Bierbauer made efforts to advocate these problems on international platforms. The Hungarian chapter of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) was founded in 1929, one year after the establishment of CIAM itself. Although Bierbauer did not belong to the founding members of the Hungarian CIAM group, he supported their activities by dedicating complete *Tér és Forma* issues to their ideas and recently executed works between 1932 and 1937. Farkas Molnár, József Fischer[8] and Máté Major were among the leading figures of the group, whose ideas and modernist architecture not only shaped the CIAM issues but also represented a recurring

[8] After Virgil Bierbauer's resignation from his editorship in 1942, an editorial board took over *Tér és Forma*, which was headed by József Fischer until 1948, when the journal ceased publication.

pattern throughout the magazine. The beginning of Bierbauer's official participation in the group's work is undocumented, but according to Máté Major's recollections it can be dated to ca. 1934. (Major, 1978, p. 570.) In 1937, CIAM-Ost was founded to integrate the separate national groups from Central and Eastern Europe in order to handle problems especially typical to this region. One of these features, which were distinctive from Western European interests, concerned architecture in rural areas, as the population of the countryside was still considerably larger than in the cities of this region. The first meeting of CIAM-Ost was held in Budapest between 29 January and 2 February 1937 with Bierbauer's contribution who reported on the event immediately in *Tér és Forma*. (Bierbauer, 1937c) Bierbauer underlined Sigfried Giedion's participation, with whom he was in contact for many years,[9] and emphasised one of the points of Giedion's lecture in which he expressed the necessary basis of modern architecture on the local conditions. (Bierbauer, 1937c, p. 57.) Giedion's references to the association between vernacular and modern architecture and especially anonymity as an inherent pattern in both the vernacular and the modern are well-documented subjects in architectural history.[10] Bierbauer was well-aware of these ideas and regularly cited these well-known figures of referential status such as Giedion, Le Corbusier and Giuseppe Pagano in order to broaden the context of the relationship between the modern and the vernacular that he repeatedly pointed out in *Tér és Forma* in Hungarian frameworks.

As a magazine editor, Bierbauer himself became a reference point over the years and he regularly received invitations from the international scene to give lectures, participate in professional events and curate exhibitions. Although the considerable number of these invitations concerned modern architecture, Bierbauer gave a lecture e.g. at the *Entretiens sur l'art populaire* at Royaumont Abbey near Paris in 1939 about his research in the Hungarian house.[11] (Bierbauer, 1939b; Bierbauer, 1939c)

[9] In Bierbauer's correspondence, the letters they exchanged are dated to the period between 1929 and 1954 (G 1 – G 6, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture).

[10] For the recent studies in connection with Giedion and the Greek vernacular, see Matina Kousidi's papers (Kousidi, 2015; Kousidi, 2016).

[11] The letters related to the invitation to the meeting at Royaumont Abbey survived in Bierbauer's correspondence, see the letters between Virgil Bierbauer and Bernard Champigneuille, 26 April 1939 – 18 June 1939 (C 18 – C 22, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture).

Representing the Regional within the International

In the 1939 article, which he published about his participation in the conference in Royaumont Abbey, Bierbauer listed the components modern architects usually appreciated in vernacular architecture. He outlined the vernacular's moderation, severe logic, the peasants' focus on essential spatial requirements, the excellent structures with local building materials and the aesthetic that originated in structure and material. (Bierbauer, 1939b) At the same time, Bierbauer expressed his opposition to the usage of folkloristic motifs in urban architecture as follows: *'It is similarly not acceptable to furnish a pseudo peasant house to accommodate townsmen coming to spend a weekend in a riverside pub, where wavy-haired flappers would sit in shorts with cigarettes in their hands while listening to the radio.'* (Bierbauer, 1939b, p. 87.) Instead, he demanded to learn from the vernacular and apply its logic while designing modern buildings. Bierbauer dedicated notable publication material to confirm his tenets about the appropriation of vernacular architecture while expanded his perspective to international examples in *Tér és Forma*.

Although Bierbauer's scope of references to the vernacular was noticeably wide, with mentions of Northern Europe (see the Aalto weekend house referenced above), Switzerland[12] and even the traditional Japanese house, most of his notes are related to the Mediterranean. Considering the content of *Tér és Forma*, Bierbauer's correspondence and travel reports, it was the island of Capri, which made a significant impact on Bierbauer. According to Adrienne Bierbauer's memoir, they visited Capri for the first time during their Italian trip in 1928. (Bierbauer, 1958–1972, pp. 177–184.) In her recollections, she mentioned Bierbauer's initial reluctance to visit Capri as, according to Bierbauer's knowledge then, it was an island full of kitschy weekend houses and tourists. (Bierbauer, 1958–1972, p. 179.) Due to Adrienne's urge, they still took a trip to Capri, where they finally remained for eight days as they could not be parted from this *'magical island'*. On their way back, they visited an exhibition about modern architecture in Rome, where Bierbauer noticed the architect Giuseppe Capponi's designs for whitewashed, flat-roofed and cubic villas for Capri and their

[12] Bierbauer was an advocate of the German-born Carl Weidemeyer's work, who became a renowned architect in Ascona, by Lake Maggiore in Switzerland. Bierbauer compared his modernist architecture to the local vernacular, see Sebestyén, 2017, p. 116.

relatedness to the vernacular architecture of the island. (Bierbauer, 1958–1972, p. 184.) Bierbauer contacted Capponi for publication materials in the same year, they met personally in a congress in Rome in 1929 and then they remained close friends until Capponi's premature death in 1936.[13] The Bierbauers spent a few summer holidays at Capponi's villa in Capri, when Bierbauer had the opportunity to examine and record the vernacular and the modern architecture of the island as an amateur photographer; these images accompanied his report on Capri in *Tér és Forma* in 1932. (Bierbauer, 1932) Bierbauer was also in contact with Edwin Cerio, the Mayor of Capri in the early 1920s, who made a considerable impact on the built environment of the island as he, to protect the island's traditional ambience and landscape, stood for a new architecture that was in harmony with the local vernacular buildings.

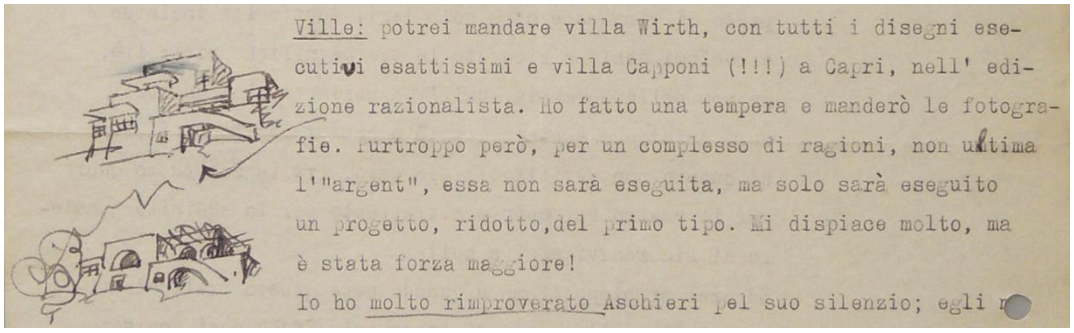
Ville: potrei mandare villa Wirth, con tutti i disegni esecutivi esattissimi e villa Capponi (!!!) a Capri, nell' edizione razionalista. Ho fatto una tempera e manderò le fotografie. Purtroppo però, per un complesso di ragioni, non ultima l'"argent", essa non sarà eseguita, ma solo sarà eseguito un progetto, ridotto,del primo tipo. Mi dispiace molto, ma è stata forza maggiore!
Io ho molto rimproverato Aschieri pel suo silenzio; egli n

Figure 4. Giuseppe Capponi's sketches of villas on a letter he wrote to Virgil Bierbauer on 29 January 1930 (no. C 10). Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture and Monument Protection Documentation Center – HMA

In the same issue of *Tér és Forma* that contained his account on Capri, Bierbauer included two reports on Santorini by Heinrich Lauterbach (Lauterbach, 1932) and Peter Meyer (Meyer, 1932). Lauterbach and Meyer were two of Bierbauer's firm connections; he was acquainted with Meyer from at least 1915 and he met Lauterbach in Wroclaw, at that time Breslau, during the Wohn-und Werkraum exhibition in 1929.[14] Lauterbach's role proved to be important to expand his

[13] See Bierbauer's and Capponi's correspondence from the period between 1928 and 1936 (C 3 – C 16, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture); also see Sebestyén, 2017, pp. 113–115.

[14] Virgil Bierbauer and Heinrich Lauterbach corresponded between 1929 and 1933 (L 15 – L 34, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture). Bierbauer's correspondence with

network in Germany and Poland, while Bierbauer helped Lauterbach on his way to Greece in 1932. According to Adrienne Bierbauer's commentary to Bierbauer's correspondence with Lauterbach, Lauterbach stayed at the Bierbauers while spending two days in Budapest on the way to Greece and, in addition to giving accommodation and good company to Lauterbach, Bierbauer provided him a letter of recommendation addressed to Emmanuel Kriezis in Athens as well as Peter Meyer's address, whose writings Lauterbach wanted to acquire.[15] These opportunities for networking enriched the publication material of *Tér és Forma* with, in this present case, the travel reports of two prominent architects who highlighted the lessons modern architects learned from the vernacular. Other references to the Mediterranean vernacular in *Tér és Forma* include the appearance of Villa Oro in Posillipo, Naples (1934–1937) by architects Luigi Cosenza and Bernard Rudofsky (Bierbauer, 1938)[16] as well as the reports on the vernacular architecture of Ibiza by Raoul Hausmann (Hausmann, 1937) and the *trulli* of Alberobello by the Hungarian architect László Gerő (Gerő, 1938) with photographic illustration by Hausmann and Gerő, respectively.

Conclusion

The considerable number of Bierbauer's references to the Mediterranean vernacular was not at all coincidental. It can be interpreted in the context of the manifold ties of Hungarian interwar cultural politics to Italy, Bierbauer's Italian orientation concerning modern architecture, the abundance of his Italian professional connections and the numerous trips to Italy in this era. His book review of *L'architettura rustica in Sicilia* by Luigi Epifanio substantially concludes Bierbauer's ideas about the relatedness of modern and vernacular architecture and especially of the Hungarian peasant house and Mediterranean architecture. (Bierbauer, 1940c) As Bierbauer points out in this article, both the Hungarian peasant and the Mediterranean house have the distinctive character of big

Peter Meyer contains letters dated to the period between 1915 and 1946 (M 61 – M 105, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture).

[15] See Adrienne Graul's comments from 1973 on her summary of Virgil Bierbauer's letter written to her on 30 August 1929 (L 14, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture).

[16] About the publication, see Bernard Rudofsky's letter to Virgil Bierbauer written on 15 February 1939 (R 42, Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture).

masses, whitewashed facades and the play with the shadow instead of the dominance of carvings and colouring typical to the Germans and the Slavs, respectively. (Bierbauer, 1940c, p. 45) His deep-rooted belief penetrated the pages of *Tér és Forma* for more than a decade culminating in such statements cited above and also manifested in Bierbauer's architecture. As his wife mentioned in her memoir, even the external staircases of Budaörs Airport (designed by Virgil Bierbauer and László Králik, 1936–1937) bear the reminiscence of the vernacular architecture of Capri. (Bierbauer, 1958–1972, p. 294.) The lesson he learned from the vernacular, hereby materialised in an architectural element that improved this building functionally and aesthetically, considered as one of his chef-d'-oeuvre.

Figure 5. External staircase of Budaörs Airport (designed by Virgil Bierbauer with the co-design of László Králik, 1936–1937), photograph by Mrs. Elemér Marsovszky (née Ada Ackermann). Virgil Bierbauer archive, Hungarian Museum of Architecture and Monument Protection Documentation Center – HMA

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DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN TRADITION
Interpretations of regional roots for modern Hungarian architecture in the 1960s

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Abstract

Sigfried Giedion's seminal paper of 1954 on new regionalism was first mentioned in Hungary by János Bonta in his opposition at the Congress of the Association of Hungarian Architects in 1961. He referred to it as an acceptable way of adaptation to the local conditions, to meet the given place, landscape, nation and circumstances. This was the first and the last case when this expression occurred in Hungary in the coming decades.
However, the question of how to relate modern architecture to the local conditions was kept on the agenda during the 1960s. In the discussions, the reference point was never the region or the place, but tradition. Even though two parallel approaches can be detected. The representatives of the first trend referred to folk architecture tradition and proposed the detailed analysis of the Hungarian peasant buildings as an authentic source. The other source or rather model was Finnish architecture, which could develop a special but at the same time European modern architecture. Modern Finnish architecture was also rooted in folk tradition and the connection between Hungarian and Finnish art and architecture could be detected back to the turn of the century, which as a 'special relationship' made this approach even more plausible.
The paper discovers the two parallel approaches – both looking for tradition – but based on different interpretations and leading to different conclusions. We present the protagonists, architects and ethnographers, and follow how these concepts appeared in theory, in architectural reviews and in realised buildings during the 1960s.

Keywords: Hungary, Finnish modern architecture, folk tradition

Modernity and tradition

In the first part of the 1950s, modern architecture as a representative of capitalist culture was disestablished and replaced with the so-called Socialist Realism, a state-required traditionalism which ruled the entire field of culture in Hungary. Although – after Khrushchev, the first secretary of the Soviet Communist Party had announced the return to modern technology and a break with historicism – Hungarian architecture returned to modern architecture at

about 1956, no attempts were made to discuss the relationship between modernity and tradition. After the uprising of 1956 political power needed years to stabilize its position and the situation calmed down only around 1960 to launch a cautious talk about the still sensitive subject.

In 1960 a new editorial board was elected for the country's only architectural periodical, *Magyar Építőművészet* (Hungarian Architecture). The chair position was kept by Máté Major, a communist university professor and an advocate of modern architecture, but the board – including János Bonta as chief editor – consisted of young architects, speaking foreign languages and many of them also acting as university lecturer. The periodical published several new examples of recent modern architecture from the international scene and gave space to cautious theoretical writings, too. The author of a keynote essay – under the title *Modernity, Secession, Tradition* – was a university professor, who started with the statement that contemporary Hungarian architecture could not be compared with the quality of French, Italian, Scandinavian or American architecture. He saw the reason in that the referred foreign examples followed modern principles and preserved their connection to their roots both (Kathy, 1960). The professor discovered the vernacular roots also in Le Corbusier's recent works, going as deep as the effects of African sources and folk architecture.[1] To find the right way he suggested to recall and analyse the turn-of-the-century Hungarian architecture, namely Hungarian Secession.

> We see that the basics of modern architectural principles were set out already in the turn-of-the-century works. These principles – truth to materials, sincerity, utility, functionality, national character – have not changed since then. … Some foreign impacts (Finnish) played a role in the turn-of-the-century architectural efforts, but our traditions – especially folk architecture – formed their basis. (Kathy, 1960, p. 37)

Reacting essays mainly touched the evaluation and re-evaluation of Hungarian turn-of-the-century architecture, considering evidence of its connection to folk

[1] It is important to note that the Hungarian word „népi" refers to peasant architecture the content of which is narrower than the usually applied „vernacular". To stress the difference we use "folk architecture" when the Hungarian text writes "népi építészet".

architecture. The author of the only direct reflection on the relationship between modernity and tradition suggested an instinctive connection between modern architecture and national character.

> In this way, the elaboration of a special Hungarian architecture relying on traditions is more of an intuitive than a rational work. The creator's architectural and aesthetic requirements as an immense necessity will force it to come to being. (Császár, 1960, p.52)

Császár's statement reflected the opinion of the majority of the profession. After the painful interlude of the forced traditionalism practising architects were reluctant to look for traditional sources, even in folk architecture. The concept of regionalism – or new regionalism as named by Sigfried Giedion in 1954 – the idea of an architecture embedded in its natural and cultural surroundings and connected to the place didn't find any reflection in the professional scene. Giedion's approach worth considering, was suggested only once, by János Bonta at the Congress of the Association of Hungarian Architects in 1961.

> Our architecture is provincial but not in the good sense of reflecting on the relatively limited conditions of a given landscape, people and situation – that we shouldn't call provincialism – but with Sigfried Giedions's words, new regionalism. Our architecture is provincial in its immaturity that it wants to look more than what it is. (Bonta, 1961, p. 144.)

Imre Kathy returned to the theme of modernity and tradition in another essay a year later. This time he clearly expressed that Hungarian turn-of-the-century architecture should be appreciated for its structural innovations and new space concept, but not for decorative shape and details. He stated that – as vernacular and professional architecture is in mutual contact – looking for traditional sources we shouldn't turn either to a certain period or to folk tradition. He also proposed an explanation why Hungarian architects return again and again to this source, namely that in Hungarian turn-of-the-century architecture the pursuit for a modern and national architecture were linked together. *'The problem of the folk and national roots did not arise so sharply elsewhere, probably in Finland, as an exception, where the social conditions were similar*. ' (Kathy, 1961, p. 49.)

The turn-of-the-century period was a flourishing relationship between Finnish and Hungarian architecture, confirmed by several personal contacts. The above-mentioned cultural background had a further element, namely the common roots, the Finno-Ugric language family. The cultural contacts were interrupted during the WW II, and officially re-started only in 1959. (Heikkilä, 1984, p. 297.) Finnish people were considered as our relatives, we had a strong architectural relationship in the first part of the 19. century, Finland had rich and well-preserved folk architecture, parallel with a modern architecture which became more and more known and appreciated internationally.

The Finnish connection

Ironically, the main promoter of Hungarian folk architecture and modern Finnish architecture was one and the same person, the ethnographer László Vargha (1904-1984). He joined the Department for History of Architecture at the Faculty of Architecture and was commissioned to teach folk architecture from 1952 and history of Hungarian architecture from 1954.

Vargha introduced his ethnographic approach to the university. He became the first general director of the freshly established independent Ethnographical Museum in 1948 and had a broad and long practice in researching folk architectural heritage. During his early career, he visited Finland and the open-air museum of Skansen in Stockholm, Sweden in 1935 (Vargha, 1935) and became a devoted advocate of creating a central collection of folk architecture in Hungary (Vargha, 1937). He participated in surveys of folk architecture in the late interwar period and continued research after the war. As a university lecturer, he had lead several field trips for students to document the vanishing past of villages left in decay in the age of heavy industrialization and urbanisation lead by the socialist central government.

During his early study trip to the North, he also built connections with local Finnish professionals. Apparently, he has lost close contact with his friends during World War II; the list of archived letters sent to Finnish colleagues only

resumed in 1968 (Vargha, 1968). Memoirs and a 1960 scientific student circle study on the application of Finnish sauna in Hungary supervised by Vargha show that he had never forgotten Finland (Istvánfi, 1994, p. 64). The author of the study and later his successor as the lecturer of folk architecture, Gyula Istvánfi remembers that Vargha emphasized the thorough knowledge on Finno-Ugric relative peoples, especially the Finns.

The activity of Vargha is definitely a link between traditional, pre-war relationship between Finnish and Hungarian professionals – maintaining friendly personal contact – and the new era of broader and more institutionalized contacts of the 1960's. His conviction towards the relationship between the Finnish and Hungarian people had never been forgotten and has strongly influenced his thinking on Hungarian folk architecture and Hungarian architecture in general. Viewed in a historical scale of two hundred years, the apparent silence in the relationship between the two nations in the postwar years was exceptional. Resuming of contacts around 1960 only restored normal proximity.

Another key person, Elemér Nagy (1928-1985) came to the fore around this time. After graduating at the Technical University of Budapest he joined the Department for History of Architecture as a lecturer and held classes up to 1962. He eventually left the university and shifted to public life. When the Association of Hungarian Architects re-formed its foreign affairs committee Nagy was appointed the correspondent for Finland. (MÉSZ, 1959) He later joined the periodical, *Magyar Építőművészet*, he was fellow from 1960 and became chief editor from 1962. Nagy gradually became the second key person in Finnish and Hungarian relations besides Vargha in the 1960s. Nagy and Vargha were also colleagues at the Department for History of Architecture.

Vargha was also an organizer of professional life for his mentees outside the university as well. He kept contact with his students after graduation and also involved the most talented architects in professional events (Gilyén, 1964). Besides his close contact with Elemér Nagy, he also initiated the career of László Szabados, who worked for the office of Aarne Ervi (Szabados, 2005), and Károly

Kaszás. Kaszás first visited Finland in 1962 as a guest of the World Festival of Youth and Students (Kaszás, 2015), returned two years later for a study and later he organized several study trips for students as a lecturer and contact person. Today he is considered one of the greatest living experts in Finnish architecture in Hungary.

Vargha also presented his knowledge outside the Technical University. Lectures were given by him at various scientific and university platforms and popularized Finnish architecture (Vargha, 1968). When talking about *Finnish folk architecture* he rather interprets it as the *architecture of the entire Finnish folk*, presuming the immediate relationship between society and its building activity. Modern Finnish and Finnish folk architecture are deeply intertwined; he admires the sustenance of folk values (Vargha, s.a.) and praises Finnish architects for their social consciousness and deep understanding of social conditions. From his preparatory sketches, we learn that he also refers to ethnographical works establishing the ethnographic context of the architecture of Finland. In his lectures, Finland is always set as a role model for modern Hungarian architecture.

Lessons of a model – results of an ideal

Modern Finnish architecture became world-wide known during the 1960s. Of course, this is mostly explained with Alvar Aalto, who was known around the world as a Finnish architect and whose buildings were included already in the 1949 edition of Giedion's seminal book *Space, Time and Architecture*. (Giedion, 1949) However, as Petra Čeferin explains, the consciously selected and presented material of the series of international exhibitions on Finnish architecture starting in 1957 helped a lot in creating a special image: within one decade the nine exhibition projects were presented in 25 countries. (Čeferin, 2003)[2]

[2] It is still waiting for explanation, that against the personal contacts and the attempts of the Association of Hungarian Architects neither of these exhbitions reached Hungary. In particular, that the material was presented in three towns of the neighbouring Czechoslovakia in 1964.

From the numerous reviews on the exhibitions, the international image of Finnish architecture of the era can be filtered and compared to contemporary Hungarian description. Among the main features common in the reviews Čeferin mentions the '*human character*' first. The masterly use of wood was evaluated as another key factor, which was easy to connect to a humanised architecture, to sensitivity. The close connection of Finnish architecture to Nature, to the natural environment, was just a further step on the same track. The impression (or according to Čeferin, the intention) of '*within Nature' embrace*' added a kind of harsh, Nordic image of the buildings. (Čeferin, 2003, p. 85.) This familiar but at the same time strange character of Finnish architecture recurred in several reviews. Finland was situated somewhere on the crossroads of East and West and the result was functional and organic at the same time. The '*national specificity*' of this architecture also occurred in a few reviews, but not as the main feature of Finnish architecture, while the Finns rather intended to sell their architecture as a '*constituent part of the international production'*. (Čeferin, 2003, p. 124.) To sum it up, Finnish architecture was appreciated for the sensitive use of materials, especially wood, for the close connection to the natural environment, and for the human character, represented in the synthesis of regional and universal.

The first article in Hungarian dedicated solely to Finnish architecture was published by Elemér Nagy in 1962. The author highlights the close relationship of modern Finnish architecture to its tradition and its immediate natural environment as opposed to mainstream, avant-garde modernism determined by abstract fine art. Compositions emerge from their surroundings due to their natural forming and local materials. Organic growth and continuity of ideas characterize this kind of modernism, as opposed to the explicit negation of the avant-garde. '*The easiest way to approach the speciality of Finnish architecture probably if we oppose it to the constructivist-functionalist trend*.' (Nagy, 1962, p. 21.) Tradition and nature as inspiration and source both appear in Nagy's description, as well as he stresses the sensuous materiality and perfect realization of the works. However, in his interpretation, the value of Finnish architecture lies rather in an opposition to the functionalist-abstract trend than

in a coordination of two approaches. In a later article, Nagy appreciates that in Finland urban designers respect the natural environment and they estimate tradition and continuity. (Nagy, 1969)

László Vargha also joined the theme with an article (based on his lecture delivered in the Association of Hungarian Architects in 1964) titled *The Folk Traditions of Finnish Architecture*. Vargha mentions the close relationship to landscape and the extensive use of natural materials. Traditions are widely known, and ethnographical heritage is respected by architects, both constantly re-evaluated and applied in practice. He praises the Finnish for their successful quest for intellectual independence from the historical styles, achieved by a deep understanding of folk architecture and rural building practice. Monumental modern architecture grows out of intuitive folk architecture but adds to it the spirit of modernity. '*This architectural attitude explains that while Finnish architecture has a special domestic flavour, at the same time – and on the highest level – it is also European*.' (Vargha, 1965, p. 56.) Vargha appreciated vernacular Finnish architecture, but only as a method, as a model for modern architecture. As one of his students expressed, '*nothing was more alien to him as to present folk architectural heritage as a subject of copying and direct application*.' (Filep, 1994, p. 82).

It can be seen, that the interpretation of Finnish architecture in the Hungarian architectural press differed somewhat from its international evaluation. The close relationship to the natural environment and the use of natural materials as characteristics were also mentioned. However, the simplicity, the elaborated details on the buildings and the importance of tradition, particularly folk tradition, were more stressed. Not by chance, when a reviewer of a recently completed office building in Budapest recalls Alvar Aalto as a supposed model, he finds the similarities in the way of thinking. He compares the building to Aalto's Rautatalo office building in Helsinki, while he praises it for the clear, simple and generous organization of inner spaces and the calm unity of the facades based on elaborated details. (Vámossy, 1964) Indeed, perfectionism, materiality and fine details characterized contemporary Finnish architecture, all

that the Hungarian building industry could offer only in a few special and exceptional case in the 1960s.

Figure 1. OTP-CHEMOLIMPEX office building, Budapest 1963. Architect Zoltán Gulyás. (Author's private archive)

In the middle of the decade, some interesting buildings were published in the periodical *Magyar Építőművészet.* all designed by Imre Makovecz. They were mainly restaurants, wineries, or related to relaxation, but all were situated in the natural or rural environment. In most cases, only the images were published, and the basic technical information and data were given. The first review came out about a road-side restaurant, the Sió Inn in 1966. The author, an architectural historian, found two main inspirational sources of the building, namely Secession and the '*special interpretation of folk architectural traditions'*. (Mendele, 1966) As mentioned above, the two elements were connected in

Hungarian architectural history. The reviewer found the elements of the turn-of-the-century architecture in the curved parapet of the terraces, the cut of the corners and in the framing of windows and doors – all formal details. The effects of the folk tradition he recognised in the main shape, in the surface treatment and materials of the building. The double-pitched roof of the consumer space referred to wine cellars, while the reed roofing and the white plaster of walls recalled traditional wine cellars. However, the reviewer remarked that this shape and material were never used in that countryside but was copied from another part of Hungary.

Figure 2. The road-side Sió Inn, near to Szekszárd 1964. Architect Imre Makovecz. (Author's private archive)

In the coming years a small group formed around Makovecz, whose works were reviewed in an article. (Kubinszky, 1970) The reviewer, again an architectural historian, also mentions the connection of their buildings to the turn-of-the-century architecture, and especially in case of Makovecz the integration of his buildings into the natural environment and reflections on the '*Hungarian rural architecture'*. However, he makes a critique, too. The main characteristic of these buildings is symmetry, which represents a forced naturalism, though the works can be interpreted within the rules of a kind of organic architecture.

For the wider public, including also the architectural profession, Makovecz's buildings recalled folk architecture, or rather an ideal of folk architecture. The idea of connectedness and peculiarity, something interesting within the low level of surrounding mass produced socialist modern architecture. Against the ambivalent evaluation of his buildings, Makovecz received the highest architecture prize in 1969. Ironically in the newspaper reporting about the award, the journalist wrote that he received it '*for his activity in the field of folk architecture*.' (Magyar Nemzet, 1969)

Conclusion

Following the forced historicism of the socialist-realist architecture and the shock of the suppressed uprising in 1956, Hungarian architecture had to redefine its relationship to its regional roots. Although neither political nor the economic situation was not particularly favourable, some cautious attempts were made to find a special way to relate modern architecture to tradition. Deeply embedded in the Hungarian history, the regional, the local as a source, could have been interpreted only as a tradition, especially the tradition of folk architecture. However, parallel to Hungarian folk architecture emerged another reference point: the Finnish model. Except for the common roots of the two languages, there were no similarities in the state of the two countries in the 1960s, concerning not only the natural surroundings but political and technical facilities. In consequence, the example of Finnish modern architecture was left for longing for a higher quality of building perfectionism, sensitive materiality and fine details.

On the other hand, for the Hungarian public, the national source of architecture was still folk architecture. Within the poor and simple modern architectural environment building shapes that recalled forms and materials of folk architecture appeared interesting and attractive. For laymen, they also had a national flavour, while the architects who followed this trend slowly moved towards the universalism of organic architecture.

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REGIONALISM AND THE FUNCTIONAL TRADITION IN DANISH MODERN ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract

*This paper discusses the discourse on regionalism and "the functional tradition" in relation to Danish modern architecture. The concept of the functional tradition was proposed by the architect Kay Fisker (1893-1965) in his 1950 essay "Den funktionelle tradition: Indtryk af amerikansk arkitektur" (*The Functional Tradition: Impressions of American Architecture*) and repeated in Danish discourse on modern architecture ever since. Through his writings, Fisker reaffirmed a national narrative of Danish architecture as being peripheral in the light of contemporary trends and ideas yet shaped by a pragmatic crypto-functionalism, nested in a local building culture and hence seldomly resulting in ground-breaking works yet continuously contributing to a national building stock of relatively high quality even if formally leaning towards more or less anonymous expressions. In his own built projects, which counts numerous housing blocks in Copenhagen, healthcare and educational institutions such as Aarhus University, Fisker, one of the key protagonists of Danish twentieth-century architecture, strived for a balance between what he termed "Internationalism" and "National Romanticism" (1960), relying on local building materials and construction techniques such as brickwork and pitched roofs. Hence, the discourse as set forth in 1950 supports Fisker's own production both pre- and prospectively. Curiously, Fisker would coin his concept of "the functional tradition" through an analysis of contemporary American architecture. He thus suggested an alternative story of what modern architecture was, could, and not least ought to be (his discourse being highly normative and driven by causal argumentation and biological metaphors i.e. architectural history performing through "evolution"). According to Fisker, traditionalism is a sort of contextualism which again can be viewed as a universal principle, bringing him close to much later ideas of critical regionalism*

Keywords: Regionalism, Modernism, Denmark, Kay Fisker, Functional Tradition.

Kay Fisker and "the functional tradition"

This paper discusses the discourse on regionalism and "the functional tradition" in relation to Danish modern architecture. The concept of the functional tradition was proposed by the architect Kay Fisker (1893-1965) in his 1950 essay "Den funktionelle tradition: Indtryk af amerikansk arkitektur" (*The Functional Tradition: Impressions of*

American Architecture) and repeated in Danish discourse on modern architecture ever since. In his own built projects, which counts numerous housing blocks in Copenhagen, healthcare and educational institutions such as Aarhus University, Fisker, one of the key protagonists of Danish twentieth-century architecture, strived for a balance between what he termed "Internationalism" and "National Romanticism" (1960), relying on local building materials and construction techniques such as brickwork and pitched roofs. Hence, the discourse as set forth in 1950 supports Fisker's own production both pre- and prospectively.

Through his writings, Fisker reaffirmed a national narrative of Danish architecture as being peripheral in the light of contemporary trends and ideas yet shaped by a pragmatic crypto-functionalism, nested in a local building culture and hence seldomly resulting in ground-breaking works yet continuously contributing to a national building stock of relatively high quality even if formally leaning towards more or less anonymous expressions. As Nils-Ole Lund has argued, Fisker's written and historical work was part of a particular pedagogical and ethical project targeted at Danish architectural practice. Fisker instituted this project through his professorship at the school of architecture in Copenhagen until 1963 and through his own professional work. Borrowing a term from Manfredo Tafuri, Fisker was an *operative* historian and writer (Lund, 1993, p. 178). His writings on Danish architectural history was, as we shall see, a project of sedimentation of his own architectural ethos.

Curiously, Fisker would coin his concept of "the functional tradition" through an analysis of contemporary *American* architecture. He thus suggested an alternative story of what modern architecture was, could, and not least ought to be (his discourse being highly normative and driven by causal argumentation and biological metaphors i.e. architectural history performing through "evolution"). Fisker's 1950 essay on the functional tradition furthermore contains some interesting remarks on regionalism. The topic of the essay is American and in particular contemporary American architecture. Fisker presents this through the lens of the concept of "the functional tradition" which he borrows from the 1950 January volume of *The Architectural Review.* But he gives the concept a new meaning, adding to that of The Architectural Review, which was primarily concerned with how urban planning and urban design would influence future architecture. Buildings, houses, were of interest to Fisker, even if it was not the the main focus of that particular volume of *The Architectural Review.* He describes how a contemporary discourse on architecture is requesting an "*organic, spontaneous* and *human* architecture" but how all of this turns into mere clichés (1950, p. 2). The fact

that *The Architectural Review* coined the term functional tradition also related to a British admiration of Scandinavian architecture during the immediate post-WWII years, for instance expressed in the description of a *new empiricism* in Swedish architecture in *The Architectural Review* in 1947 (Lund, 2008, pp. 23-53). As Lund points out:

> The Nordic countries had shown that it was possible to transform society step by step, and that a revolution was not necessary. Scandinavian architecture was seen as a symbol of this development, in which it was not the theories and the programmes that were crucial, but a tradition that absorbed the new ideas and re-formed them into an architecture typical of the region. (Lund, 2008, p. 28)

New empiricism meant an architecture which was sound, sensible, and locally embedded and in that sense someway contrary to contemporary pursuits of new styles in architecture or for a new monumentality as demanded by Sigfried Giedion. In his 1950 essay, Fisker rejects these ideas, arguing that contemporary problems such as providing sufficient dwellings or public institutions should be the matter of concern for architects, not style. Fisker points to certain robust aspects of American architecture as examples to draw inspiration from, what was termed *the Bay Region style* by Lewis Mumford in 1947. Yet Fisker is critical of Mumford's description of this type of architecture as being particularly American:

> It seems unfortunate and reactionary to me, that Mumford now strives to label the quiet and modest houses which characterizes this school as being *national*. It would be more natural to determine the *regional* influence on the form, and to identify parallels with architecture in other parts of the world based on similar regional preconditions for instance in Northern Europe, England, Scandinavia, and Northern Switzerland. (Fisker, 1950, p. 5, my transl.)

Yet we might note that Mumford in fact did recognize that the attitude of the architects of the Bay Region wasn't particularly national. As he stated in his column in the *New Yorker* in 1947: "The style is actually a product of the meeting of Oriental and Occidental architectural traditions, and it is far more truly a universal style than the so-called international style of the nineteen-thirties, since it permits regional adaptations and modifications." (2007, p. 291)

In his 1950 essay, Fisker provides his reader with several examples of historical and contemporary American architecture by such architects as H.H. Richardson, Louis H. Sullivan, Pietro Belluschi, Bernard Maybeck, Charles and Henry Greene, and William W.

Wurster. Fisker praises the craftsman-like and the crystalline forms of some of these houses, as well as the connection between building and landscape, furthermore pointing to the influence of Japanese architecture: "The cohesion between house and landscape might be the most significant value of the Bay Region architecture (…) (1950, p. 18, my transl.). Fisker argues that some of the contemporary houses by Richard J. Neutra and Wurster in a very beautiful way continues the functional tradition:

> There is a natural homogeneity about this architecture which under the given regional conditions leads to the employment of certain materials, constructions, and forms. These houses express a living and lush idea of architecture, free of formalism, growing out of a heathy humanness and a strong and positive social understanding, the only foundation for contemporary architecture. (1950, p. 32, my transl.)

Fisker repeats some of his ideas on the regional in his lecture "Principles of Form" held at the Royal Danish Academy's School of architecture during the 1950s. In the published summary of his 1956 lecture he states in his twelfth and final lecture on "the functional tradition" that:

> Architecture will always be subject to certain regionally determined formal demands; climate and mentality, the materials of the site and other conditions are very different across the globe, and each region has its own natural form of expression. Architectural form is thereby determined locally, but international, independent of coincidental, national borders. Hence in terms of functionality, the Latin, firm cubic form is exactly as right as the Nordic, free form. (1999, p. 130, my transl.)

Fisker attempts to establish a middle ground between opposites, striving for a balance between local and global by arguing for their interdependence. (See also Bendsen, 2009, pp. 155-159). Yet in his book on Danish architecture in the period 1850-1950, co-written with Knud Millech and published in 1951, Fisker and Millech identified two different tendencies in Danish architecture of the immediate past, the period 1930-50: the internationally inspired functionalists – and the functional tradition. As they write: "The international functionalism is particularly attached to the new building techniques, primarily the development of ferroconcrete (…) The domestic, functional architecture inherits substantially from tradition, including a sense of enclosed form and the textural character of materials." (Millect & Fisker, 1951, p. 6) The narrative of opposed directions in Danish modern architecture was quite influential and repeated in Tobias Faber's 1963

book on the history of Danish architecture (translated into English in 1978). As Faber stated in his introduction to the latter tendency: "The functional ideal of full relationship between form, construction and contents did, of course, fit perfectly with the practical virtues of Danish building tradition, and during the 30s many architects regarded the new ideas sympathecally (sic!) without thinking it necessary to throw tradition overboard." (Faber, 1978, p. 187)

Figure 1. Kay Fisker, Brøndbyparken, 1951. Fisker designed the masterplan, eight eight-storey building and twenty-eight three-storey buildings for this Copenhagen satellite town. The houses are surrounded by greenspace and a large central common green, taking inspiration from the English Garden City movement. Traditional Danish materials and building technique such as brick walls and pitched tile roofs are merged with prefab concrete elements. Photo by the author.

Form and ethos

In one of his last essays, "Persondyrkelse eller anonymitet" published in December 1964, just six months before his death, Fisker argues against nationalism in architecture, but for a regionalism based on climatic and technological conditions. The essay is a highly ethical statement, arguing for an "international community" typical of the post-war humanism. Significantly, Fisker's argumentation is based on biological metaphors, describing his pros as "natural" and his cons as "unhealthy":

> The notion of national architecture is unhealthy. It would be more natural to replace the national architecture with a regional one. But the natural division according to climatic or other regional conditions more and more seem to vanish due to the technical expansion. In the future, constructions will be identical in - Leopoldville and Kansas City. The Ballerup Scheme [a Copenhagen suburb, MS] might as well be situated in Uganda. (1964, p. 522, my transl.)

In his essay, Fisker reacts strongly against contemporary architecture which he finds too chaotic and experimental, for, as he states, "*Architecture is order."* (1964, p. 522, ital. in orig., my transl.) He recognizes the importance of strong personalities in architecture yet calls for attention to the mundane or what he terms *anonymous* architecture. "It is the neutral, anonymous architecture which should characterize our milieu and it is this we should struggle to improve (…) Ordinary architecture should be *anonymous* and *timeless*." (1964, p. 522, my transl., ital. in orig.) International architectural tendencies have historically, according to Fisker, been translated into Danish, yet what characterizes Danish architecture is what he terms a "healthy naturalness" (1964, p. 524). Fisker connects this idea with functionalism, not considered as style but an ethics: "The ethics of functionalism dictates that no form is anything in itself. Form only acquires meaning due to the function it adheres to. We should still fight for this ethics." (1964, p. 526, my transl.) The goal of contemporary architecture should be to create an orderly cityscape and landscape, good dwellings and a human milieu, according to Fisker. This implied a delicate balance of difference: "We have an architectural distinctiveness which we should protect, but we must not become self-obsessed." (1964, p. 526)

Critical voices regarding the concept of the functional tradition were nevertheless already present during Fisker's lifetime. Even his own biographer, Hans Erling Langkilde, publishing the first monograph on Fisker in 1960, pointed to some of its problems. Langkilde is skeptical as to how well the term describes Fisker's own works of architecture, which according to Langkilde were really not that well-related to functionalism, yet also transcended mere traditionalism (1960, p. 102). Langkilde notes that the term "the functional tradition" is undefined and opaque but could be interpreted to mean an amalgamation of core functionalist values and formal preferences for well-defined volumes and spaces with some traditional implication. "The link might eventually prove to be a paradox (…)" Langkilde states (1960, p. 102). To Langkilde, Fisker could rather be described as "a classicist humanist".

Later authors have added to this critique of the concept. In the monograph on Fisker edited by Steffen Fisker, Johan Fisker and Kim Dirckinck-Holmfeld and published in 1993, a whole chapter was dedicated to the concept, written by Nils-Ole Lund. He starts off where Langkilde had ended in 1960, but his critique is more thorough as he situates the concept in a historical context. He further explains what Langkilde's paradox might mean: "The paradoxical is to be found in the functional tradition as well as in Fisker's own houses and is caused by the fact that it is difficult to unite the useful and the beautiful when beauty first and foremost is being defined as order." (Lund, 1993, p. 174) Thus, Fisker's will to *order* as a main aim of architecture is exactly what causes the problems and frustrations of Danish architecture, according to Lund. He proposes a modification of the concept of "the functional tradition". Since this tradition is driven by an inherently classicist will to order, as was also indicated by Langkilde in his description of Fisker as a classicist humanist, Lund would rather term it "an aesthetic-functional tradition" (1993, p. 174).

Polemically, Lund incorporates some of Fisker housing projects in his discussion of the concept of the functional tradition. He shows that Fisker's own work from the 1930s, which Fisker describes as belonging to the functional tradition, could just as well be described as belonging to an international functionalism. It leads Lund to conclude that rather than speaking of two directions, one should think of modern Danish architecture from the end of the 1920s to the early 1960s as embraced by a single current which nevertheless contains opposite ideals (1993, p. 179). At bottom line, Danish architecture is characterized by a pursuit of order and harmony, says Lund, even if it attempts to combine such an aesthetic ideal with a functional or even rational ethos: "The rationality in Danish architecture is the rationality of beauty, the belief in order and harmony is the final goal of architecture." (1993, p. 180, my transl.) Furthermore, Lund links such values of regularity and simplicity – "the dream of bourgeois classicism" – to a national identity based on similar values, of harmony and modesty (1993, pp. 180-182).

Traditional or regional?

In order to gain a fuller understanding of the roots of the notion of the functional tradition and its regional implication, we should have a brief look at Danish architecture during Fisker's formative years in the beginning of the twentieth century. One of the most significant protagonists of this period was P.V. Jensen-Klint. According to Thomas Bo Jensen, Jensen-Klint's work as an architect demonstrates a "unsentimental mixture of

tradition and technique" that would heavily influence the work of such architects as Fisker and C. F. Møller as part of Danish modernism after 1930, particularly in their buildings for Aarhus University. Jensen describes this as Jensen-Klint's "transformation machine" in which regional identity, international impulses, and social value would amalgamate (2006, p. 38). Certain architectural typologies were applied as a filter for personal and external impulses in Jensen-Klint's poetics, namely the traditional Danish farm, manor house and village church. He particularly praised the way the village church, the manor house and the farm were integrated in the landscape, describing these typologies as directly growing out of the ground. As he stated in 1909: "All three are so far from disfiguring the landscape that they quite the contrary enhance its beauty, provide it with more character, since they are balanced in terms of materials and form, colour and location." (Jensen-Klint 1909, quoted in Fisker, 1963, p. 41). Fisker, in an essay written in 1963, points out that there would be even a fourth type of building that Jensen-Klint would look out for, namely the ancient dolmen, "(…) the monument of our very landscape, nature and art in unity." (1963, p. 41). Fisker directly positions himself along the line of Jensen-Klint' architectural poetics: "The school of Klint is still alive and strong in contemporary Danish architecture. Most of us are indebted to it. I consider myself a student of Jensen-Klint (…) First and foremost, Jensen-Klint has taught us to admire the simple, the honest, the sculptural play of large volumes and the textural value of the materials." (1963, p. 80) Jensen-Klint's architecture was influenced by national-romantic tendencies as well as by the English arts and crafts movement. In his 1963 essay on Jensen-Klint, Fisker even compared Jensen-Klint's physical appearance to that of William Morris and identifies a striking resemblance, as if to thereby emphasize their kinship (1963, p. 38).

The early years of the twentieth century witnessed an increasing interesting in Danish mundane/vernacular building culture, particularly amongst young architects in a reaction against the historicism taught at the Royal Academy's school of architecture. A number of students at the Royal Academy attempted to found a new school of architecture in 1902, critical of the conservative teaching. They didn't succeed but ended up taking apprenticeships with Jensen-Klint, who insisted on the measuring of old Danish architecture, publishing some of his ideas in the book *Bygmesterskolen* (The School of the Master Builder) in 1911 (Smidt, 2004, p. 322).

Figure 2. Kay Fisker and Aage Rafn, Gudhjem Railway Station, Bornholm, 1915. Fisker's first completed building project was inspired by vernacular Danish architecture as well as English arts and crafts. Photo by the author.

Another influential architect at the time, Hack Kampmann, was appointed professor at the Royal Academy in 1908, and decided in 1910-11 to divide the so-called Temple Class, in which the antique architecture was studied, into two – the Temple Class and the Danish Class, the latter addressing common buildings which had not previously been studied at the Academy (Smith, 2004, pp. 328-29). This was part of a general reaction in Danish architecture. A brochure published in connection with the national exhibition in Aarhus in 1909, "Stationsbyen" (The Railway Town) stated that: "It has not been our intention to create new, hitherto unknown forms. To the contrary, we wanted to demonstrate that certain values exist in our old domestic architecture which should not be left unacknowledged and which could answer to the requirements of the present." (Borch, 1909, no pag., quoted after Smith, 2004, p. 329, my transl.) Claus M. Smidt has furthermore pointed to the regionalism and vernacular tendencies in Kay Fisker's very first realized project, the railway stations at Bornholm (with Aage Rafn). Smidt sees in these buildings an interest in the regional and craft-based, which however was not limited to Denmark but was a European phenomenon at the time, promoted in the work of such architects as Baillie Scott, Parker & Urwin, Alfred Messel and Heinrich Tessenow (Smidt, 2004, p. 341)

Fisker would later connect such regionalism and sense of tradition with a particular ethos. In 1947, in a speech held before the Danish Academy, Fisker emphasized the ethical or programmatic aspects of functionalism, aspects which according to Fisker should survive the then widespread criticism of functionalism as a style: "Functionalism holds a moral that is eternal: the demand for functional architecture." (2008, p. 35) Fisker shows that this programme was historically situated, that many of its principles had been formed already during the nineteenth century: "In social and technical forces as well as in planning, the origins of functionalism had all been present in the nineteenth century. Only the language of form had lagged behind." (2008, p. 37) Fisker supports the critique of this language of functionalism: "Functionalism was a cleansing agent which swept over the nations like a storm, liberating and stimulating. It was necessary, but it destroyed too much. Architecture became skeletal, sterile and antiseptic. At times the whole movement seemed inhuman." (2008, p. 38) Yet a contemporary answer to this crisis is not a return to historical forms, to ornament, decoration or Beaux-Arts classicism, argues Fisker. What is needed is a further development of architecture based on the core values of functionalism, not as a style but as a programme: "(…) we should be concerned with the development of the more vigorous and human side of functional architecture: a clear and functional frame around modern existence, created with new means; further development of tradition, perhaps, but not a return to forms past and gone." (2008, p. 39)

Perspectives

In Fisker's written discourse, regionalism is part of the notion of the functional tradition. Yet how should we relate this notion and its regionalist implications to other notions of regionalism? The problem is that Fisker's descriptions of regional aspects are rather vague. But importantly, he does not propose a dichotomy between the local and the global. His regionalism is not grounded in the soil in a Heideggerian way, neither is it nationalistic. In that regard, Fisker seems to agree more with Lewis Mumford that he would acknowledge himself. A regionalism which, like Mumford's, is understood not as being opposed to the modern, not a historicist approach (Levaivre, 2003, p. 35). Liane Lefaivre has pointed out that Mumford as well did not put down a clear theory of regionalism, but that various aspects of his version of regionalism can be identified in his writings, including a rejection of historicism, attention to nature and landscape, but not in a pastoral nostalgic way, open-mindedness as regards contemporary technologies, attention to community, but not considered mono-cultural, and the rejection of an

opposition between the local and the universal (Lefaivre, 2003, pp. 35-39). As we have seen, several of these concerns were shared with Fisker, even if his version of a regional architecture tended to be more aesthetically oriented as Lund has argued. Fisker insists on difference in a time of increasing industrialization and global capitalism. A point of view shared by later advocates of regionalism such as Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis in their critique of contemporary globalization (Lefaivre & Tzonis, 2012). According to Fisker, traditionalism is a sort of contextualism which again can be viewed as a universal principle, bringing him close to much later ideas of critical regionalism as for instance proposed by Kenneth Frampton (1983). We may also note that Frampton has pointed to the Bay Region school in his writings on critical regionalism and used the Danish architect Jørn Utzon – a student of Fisker – as an example of his critical regionalism. (1983, p. 153) Fisker's notion of the functional tradition continued in Danish architecture discourse after his death in 1965, even if he never presented it as a rigorous theory. As we have seen, it bears several similarities with other kinds of regionalism by insisting on regional differences, particularly regarding sites and materiality. Yet, Fisker's discourse on architecture also had strong aesthetic and formalistic tendencies, targeted at providing order and regularity. In this sense, it differs from late modern or deconstructivist ideas, which would confront the presumed chaos which Fisker so directly opposed, by considering it an unavoidable contemporary condition that architects might nevertheless address critically.

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THE POLISH AVANT-GARDE ARCHITECTURE IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD - REGIONALISM, NATIONALISM AND MODERN ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract

The article presents the most important Polish architectural achievements from this period and tries to answer the question: which connects regionalism, nationalism and modern architecture. The interwar period was extremely significant moment in the history of architecture. At that time, architectural design was in crisis. Historicism and eclecticism did not work in the post-industrial world. In many countries you can see the search for a new style, on the one hand, adequate for technological development, on the other hand - based on native traditions and referring to regional architecture.
The Polish avant-garde architecture in the interwar period was a very interesting phenomenon. As in a nutshell, different trends have focused here - from the still widespread historicism to secession, from modern trends based on the experiences of leading modernists, such as Stanisław and Barbara Brukalscy, Szymon and Helena Syrkusowie, to the Zakopane style, made by Stanislaw Wyspiański. This period in Polish history of architecture not only radically changed the character of Polish city landscape and shaped further developments, it also transformed the experience of reality in a meaningful way. Despite its significant influence on the present shape of our lived environment the importance of the avant-garde remains poorly recognized. Modernist designers usually turned away from historical background, and at the same time they were intensively looking for a justification for the existence of theirs buildings. They tried to do something new and, simultaneously, were afraid of the reaction of society. Regional architecture, with its details and characteristic solutions, has often become the reference point for modern solutions.

Keywords: history of architecture, polish interwar architecture, regionalism in architecture

Although at the end of the 19th century, historicism was still an important feature of architecture, it already contained many elements characteristic for the modern architecture of the 20th century. The turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries was a significant moment of crystallisation of the modern architectural thought, and buildings dating back to that time feature a particularly interesting

phenomenon. On the one hand, they are deeply rooted in the previous decade, while on the other, they also bring a breeze of modernity. There were two main trends: the first one based on engineering structures, initiating the use of new, non-traditional construction materials, such as steel, concrete and glass; and the other one, preserving the traditional construction style, but also attempting to break with historicism and eclecticism in favour of creating a new style, characteristic for the new times. At the beginning of the 20th century the two trends merged and created a new style in architecture, i.e. the International Style.

One of the major questions asked by architects representing this period was the question about the source of inspiration, about the fundamentals of creation. University education clearly referred to traditional patterns, based on references to classical architecture, its characteristic details and proportions. However, technological progress and the introduction of new construction materials, such as steel, concrete and glass, put such approach under a question mark. Traditional construction methods in public utility buildings were gradually replaced with new, more economical solutions, and a historic detail remained only an attire to be selected by an investor from a vast range of available models, frequently originating from different historic periods. Freedom of choice, not dependant on traditional methods of construction, set out of context, greatly contributed to propagating eclecticism on a large scale. Traditional architecture started to resemble *'a bal masqué'* (Pevsner, 2013), and architects, and shortly after them investors as well, started to doubt the sense of their work.

Education provided by technical colleges in the 19th century encompassed education on modern solutions stemming from the application of the new materials. These solutions were based on complicated theoretical calculations concerning the strength and statics of buildings, and (at least initially) they concerned mostly the newly constructed engineering structures, such as bridges, viaducts, factories or exhibition halls. Engineers designed according to their acquired engineering knowledge, without any references to tradition or historic detail. Such approach caused a gap, and this lack of connection with the past

had a negative impact on public opinion and the level of acceptance of new solutions, particularly by the conservative circles.

Polish architecture of that period did not lag behind the global standards. It is possible to identify therein features of almost all the trends characteristic for that period. The avant-garde Polish architecture of the inter-war period followed the models of France, Germany or England. It was both important to keep up with western solutions, and to develop an individual style of the model solutions.

Regionalism in architecture

Different trends that could be observed in the architecture of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries tried the tackle the aforementioned problems of identity. One of the solutions was an attempt to refer to local features of traditional building style, and traditional rural architecture became a frequent source of inspiration. This trend, which developed primarily on the level of aesthetics of the form, produced finally a new style characteristic for the very end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, which is commonly referred to as the Art Nouveau.

In 1858, William Morris – a designer, and Philip Webb (1831-1915) – an architect, built a house in Baxley Heath which, according to them, was supposed to be a return to old, medieval methods. With this approach, the investor and the architect saw a possibility of renewal of contemporary applied arts, marred with historic eclecticism on the one hand, and with industrial production, on the other. The Red House was an attempt to come back to traditional English countryside development, contrary to the prevailing Victorian style. It was the first building in England, which had an irregular, eye-pleasing form, and which organically blended with the landscape and employed local building traditions. Such an approach was an intermediate phase between the historicism and the modernism in architecture. It did not aspire to introduce a totally new, original style, in complete separation from historic forms. New tendencies in English architecture were further developed by Charles F. Annesley Voysey, an architect

(1857-1941), who worked out his own style, crucial for the development of modern architecture, yet strongly rooted in local architecture of the English countryside. The new aesthetics was based on mutual relations between the mass and the area, and in Voysey's projects, what stands out are the natural forms and their organic unity with the surroundings. Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo (1851-1942), as well as the architects from a Scottish group *The Four* led by Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928) pursued a similar path. In the buildings designed by the Glasgow group, apart from the official opposition to historicism and attempts to find a new, rational style in construction, we can also notice references to traditional Scottish architecture, countryside cottages and old manor houses. This tendency is first of all visible in residential buildings, can also be noticeable in the most famous Mackintosh's building, the School of Art in Glasgow (1897-1899; 1907-1909 library building).

The need to justify and to place the architectural works in the context of vernacular architecture is also demonstrated in the works of two (mentally and physically) distant pioneers of modern architecture, namely Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959) and the guru of modernist architecture, Le Corbusier (1887-1965). For example, when Wright created the first designs of residential houses, he looked for inspiration in the traditional architecture of American pioneers, whereas in the early works of Charles Edouard Jeanneret we can see how much he was fascinated with fauna and flora of Swiss highland.

Regionalism appears in the architecture of this period as one of the means of finding sense in architectural designing, lost in the process of mechanical imitation of classical details. The concept of national style assumed the need of working out a language of forms corresponding in their nature to the specifics of a given nation and manifesting its distinctiveness. Buildings were to testify to the nation's history and the richness of its culture.

In the Polish architecture we can see such tendencies partially in Art Nouveau architecture of development in many cities, and in the particularly in the then trendy *Zakopane style*, popularised mostly by Stanisław Witkiewicz (1851-1915). Witkiewicz's goal was to lay foundations for Polish modern national

architecture based on the art of Podhale. The style was propagated by W. Matlakowski, W. Eliasz-Radzikowski and J. Wojciechowski, but despite their efforts, it was mostly adopted in the construction of mountain chalets. The *Zakopane style* was also applied in the manufacturing of furniture, household objects, clothing, china, musical instruments and souvenirs. Elements of highlanders' culture were also reflected in the works of composers and writers. In a wider sense, the *Zakopane style* includes all manifestations of Podhale folk art transposed upon the national culture. Witkiewicz followed the traditional construction style of Podhale highlanders, enriching it with Art Nouveau elements. He expanded the layout of a two-chamber highlanders' cottage transforming it into a villa intended for wealthy visitors from the cities. According to his guidelines, a single-bay or double-bay houses were built with sloping steep roofs covered with shingles, where the first floor level was usually arranged perpendicularly to the ground floor. The characteristic element was the high wall base made of broken stone. Due to the terrain, wall bases were of different height (according to the land incline; on the one side of the building, the wall base was higher and incorporated windows with arched lintel providing daylight to the basement). The walls were made of halved round logs interlocked at the corners by notching. Interlocked saddle notches on the corners of the timber walls made them look more elegant.

Witkiewicz incorporated a great number of decorations typical of Podhale building style. His roofs were decorated with vertical wooden ornaments located at the roof ridgepole on the perimeter rafters, usually resembling a lily or a tulip. Gables, windows and doors were finished with *little suns* (, i.e. narrow slats fixed radially. Halved logs protruding outside the notched corners (*lynxes*) were carved into floral ornaments, typical for decorative motives from Podhale.

Another motive typical for the houses designed by Witkiewicz was an open porch located under an overhang on the southern elevation of the building, supported on the arches of stone wall base, and small attic rooms. Through their shape, they were a reference to open flap doors located on roofs of traditional cabins and sheds on Podhale meadows, which were used to load hay inside. Despite promotion by artistic circles during the inter-war period, this style was not

adopted as a national style in the Polish architecture of the period. Instead, it remained only a local peculiarity, constituting an interesting reference to similar tendencies observed in other countries.

Search for a national style

Apart from the *Zakopane style*, largely as a result of the initiative taken by the Society of Friends of Fine Arts, the manor style was conceived within the *Cracow Art Noveau* style in architecture and then gained popularity in the 1920s. The movement was inspired with the traditional architecture of noblemen mansions. The main creators of this trend in the Polish architecture during the inter-war period were Józef Gałęzowski (1877-1963), Romuald Gutt (1888-1974), Tadeusz Tołwiński (1887-1951), Rudolf Świerczyński (1887-1943), (Kotula, Krakowski, 1972). The *mansion style* was especially popular in the first half of the 1920s, later it lost its importance, giving way to modernism. At the request of more conservative investors, however, numerous buildings were constructed in this style also in the 1930s.

In the symbolic sphere, this style referred to the golden age in the culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth - which was supposed to be a cure for the crisis associated with the years spent under foreign rule, when Poland for almost one hundred years disappeared from the map of Europe. After Poland regained its independence, many designers returned enthusiastically to the idea of the national style. Architects used characteristic details in various ways, from repetition to free interpretation: a porch with a columned portico, supported by two or four columns, a broken Polish roof, alcoves; the whole composition was complemented with white, plastered walls and roofing made of shingles or tiles. The aim was to get a picturesque structure, both well-defined and well-composed into the surroundings.

Polish avant-garde architecture

Several trends can be noticed in the development of Polish architecture during the inter-war period: Art Nouveau, manor architecture (national eclecticism), historical eclecticism (architectural output of Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz, 1883-1948), or the most significant - modernised classicism, mainly associated with state patronage, characterised by representative monumentalism. Independently from those trends dominating in the official architecture, Polish avant-garde architecture was slowly developing during the inter-war period. In 1924 the *Blok* magazine began to be published, and the artists and architects associated with it preached views postulating the creation of functional architecture, in which social radicalism was to be combined with a modern approach to design. The importance of utilitarianism, constructivism was emphasised, and analogies and connections between art, architecture and technology were emphasised. The focus was on the issue of functionalism:

> Change of building material, changes in the system and state of building technology, determining changes in the external appearance of the building, the evidence of this are: the aircraft, airship, cruiser, transatlantic steamer (...) the engine is the purposefulness of the building" (Blok, 1924, No. 5, p. 10).

Blok also stressed the need to fight individuality in art, treated creativity as a collective work, in which art should provide objective values, and its quality should be determined not by talent, but by conscious and systematic work. The authors referred to De Stijl, to simplification of the means of expression and to mass reproduction of works of art. In the subsequent issues of the magazine, articles by Theo van Doesburg, Mies van der Rohe, were published and activities of van't Hoff, Rietveld, and Le Corbusier were highlighted. Among the Polish artists associated with *Blok*, Mieczysław Szczuka and Teresa Żarnowerówna focused on architecture and published their projects and sketches of spatial compositions based on a purely artistic construction, referring to the works of Kazimierz Malewicz.

In 1926 a group named *Praesens*[1] was formed, which gathered many former "blockers" and attracted young architects, such as Szymon Syrkus (1893-1964), Józef Szanajca (1902-1939), or later Barbara (1899-1980) and Stanisław (1894-1967) Brukalscy. The group published only two issues of the *Praesens* magazine, which was envisaged as a quarterly (1926, 1930). The group's goal was to propagate new trends in architecture and art. In addition to the articles written by its members, there were texts, among others, by Malewicz, Mondrian and Ouda. Issues related to architecture concerned mainly social problems, economic conditions, and the functionality of the solutions adopted; issues related to the industrialisation and prefabrication of building elements, their standardisation as well as the organization of work at the construction site were also widely discussed. In the first issue of the *Preasens* magazine, Szymon Syrkus published a program text entitled *Preliminary Assumptions in Architecture*. According to its content, an individual flat was to become an "apparatus", and architecture - a function of social, engineering and spatial-artistic factors.

The views of the leading architects associated with *Prasens* were partially implemented in the project commitments they undertook. One of the leaders of the group was Szymon Syrkus, who studied successively at the University of Technology in Vienna (1911), Graz (1912-1914), Riga (1915-1918), Moscow and at the Faculty of Architecture of the Warsaw University of Technology (1918-1922), where he obtained a diploma. In the following years, he began studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow and an internship at the Académie des Beaux Arts in Paris. During his stay in Germany, he also visited the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar. After returning from abroad, he got involved with the *Blok* group, where he collaborated with Teresa Żarnowerówna and Mieczysław Szczuka. In 1925 he published his first article *Architectural foundations of housing construction*. Due to the differences of views, he left *Blok* and became one of the founders of the *Praesens* group.

In 1925, Syrkus and Henryk Oderfeld implemented the project of the Old People's Care Home at Wolska Street 18, in Warsaw, with a strictly functional plan and façades completely devoid of decorations. In the years 1927-1928,

[1] After the split in the *Blok* group.

together with Andrzej Pronaszko, he designed the 'Simultaneous Theatre', modelled on Bauhaus solutions, in which the stage consisted of two revolving rings surrounding a separate part of the audience; he created also an experimental theatre stage in Żoliborz (1933), a modest version of the aforementioned solution.

Simultaneously with the design work, Szymon Syrkus published theoretical texts presenting his views and from the very beginning he was actively involved in CIAM works during subsequent congresses in 1933, 1937 and 1956. One of his most important publications was the functional Warsaw study, prepared in co-operation with Jan Chmielewski in 1934 and reported at the CIRPAC in London. This work gained both many supporters as well as opponents; the latter were afraid of the utopianism of the proposed solutions.

In 1926, Szymon Syrkus married Helena Eliasberg/Niemirowska[2], and from that moment on the spouses worked closely together, both during designing and coining of new architectural theories, jointly participated in the life of the international environment of avant-garde architects. One of their joint projects was a study on the industrial production of apartments, in which the Syrkuses developed a model type of housing with a modular structure, with a span containing a kitchen and a sanitary cabin. In 1933, they were both present at the CIAM IV congress, during the adoption of the Athens Charter.

Their conception of mass produced residential units was implemented in the design of a housing estate for a Warsaw Housing Cooperative - Rakowiec housing estate, at the junction of Pruszkowska and Wiślicka streets (1934-1938). The housing estate was envisaged for 200 homeless, working class families, therefore their costs of use were meant to be affordable for the workers. The new, functional layout of the housing estate assumed the elimination from the residential units of all the functions for which common areas could have been designated. The buildings were designed in steel frame technology, yet in the process of the actual construction it was replaced with the traditional brick technology due to price rises. The sizes of residential units were

[2] In press publications until 1935, she used the pseudonym Niemirowska, with the exception of publications on architecture which, after being married (1927) she signed with the name H. Syrkus (Piłatowicz, 2009)

standardised on the basis of the human scale analysis - 2.7 m, area of residential units: 32,6m2 (31,8m2). Modest fit-out and repetitiveness of solutions were meant to reduce the costs. Helena Syrkusowa wrote about it as follows:

> Despite modest fit-out of the residential units, we are of the opinion that Rakowiec design does not contradict the principles of improvement of the living standards. Small size of the units is compensated with the overall house building design envisaged on the same plot of land. The house shall accommodate a common bathroom, a club, a nursery school and a laundry with machines, where the housing estate female inhabitants will be able to wash their clothes cheaper and more comfortably in comparison to a 6 room flat owner. In this way, by further and further eliminations from the residential units of all those activities that can be better performed and at a lower costs in common rooms, we arrive at more and more modest residential units of higher and higher cultural value. We may, thus, risk a statement that the size of a residential unit can be in inverse proportion to fit-out of collective rooms with no impairment to the value of such residential units. (Zespół Preasens, 1931, p. 7)

Another housing estate built on the basis of a design made for the Workers' Housing Estate Association by the Syrkuses was a housing estate of 116 terraced houses in Łódź-Marysin and 17 houses in Grudziądz erected in the years 1934-1936. These terraced houses were composed of the same segments with bedrooms on the mezzanine and their façades were made of prefabricated components and wood, which on the whole rendered an interesting visual effect at low costs.

Working for private clients interested in small houses, the Syrkuses could also experiment with a more expensive solutions. One of such an experimental house constructed with the use of modern building materials was the house built in 1930 for Aleksander Załszypin at ul. Jasiowa in Konstancin (Skolimów) in the steel frame technology developed by Stanisław Hempel, filled with light aerated

concrete components, with prefabricated lining of a thin layer of stone from Pinczów quarries patented by engineer Czesław Pukiński.

After the war had broken out, the Syrkuses started working in the Architectural and Urban Planning Studio, which operated at the Warsaw Housing Cooperative and at a Cooperative Building Enterprise. Until the third quarter of 1942, the Syrkuses ran a team developing the district and WSM Rakowiec housing estate. The team then worked out a study of a social housing estate compliant with the CIAM guidelines, with fresh air, sun and greenery access ensured, based on the three level system of shaping bonds within a community (house - residential complex (colony) - district). The Syrkus model envisaged public space with greenery and buildings housing educational and cultural institutions within the premises of a housing estate and with services, shops and car parks outside, along the streets.

Other well-known architects of this period were Barbara and Stanisław Brukalscy. They designed both buildings, which adhered to their own ideas on residential development, as well as interiors, furniture and neon signs, some of which have been classified as ingenious pieces of applied art. In the 1920s the Brukalscy joined the *Praesens* group that brought together avant-garde architects and artists. In the 1930s they tried to implement the ideas of the *Praesens* group in their designs of housing estates in Warsaw, among others in Żoliborz. In that period they also designed their own house, which became the first avant-garde building in Poland. Irregular, recessed building block of the villa resembled the buildings designed in those times in Holland by artists propagating Neoplasticism (*De Stijl*). On the basis of postulates formulated at the second Congress of Modern Architecture, the *Praesens* group initiated a Polish program called *The smallest flat*. The architects designed buildings and their interiors to be affordable for the lowest social classes. The results of the program were presented at the exhibition in 1930. Barbara and Stanisław Brukalscy also displayed the wooden furniture, with tops and seats covered with grey linoleum to make their cleaning easier. They furthermore designed a kitchen featuring the functionalities of the famous *Frankfurt kitchen*.

Summary

Polish avant-garde in the inter-war period is an interesting example of architectural activities closely interrelated with the international trends, featuring, however, their own, individual style. Analysing the development of that period we can see that almost all significant trends of the international architecture are represented therein. Buildings in Art Noveau style or in Classical or eclectic style were constructed next to one another, with buildings featuring local traditions, e.g. in the *Zakopane Style* (or *Witkiewicz Style*) or in the manor house style, appearing here and there. Polish architects actively participated in the major field specific events of those times and co-authored new trends in architectural designing and urban planning. Their achievements were recognised in the international arena and at the same time clearly demonstrated the ideas formed out of the Polish realia, through the prism of Poland's complex political situation after regaining independence. In the designs and buildings constructed on their basis by the leading Polish architects of the times we can see both their individual footprint in the area of the proposed functional and formal solutions and high level of engineering know-how, knowledge of advanced technologies and active pursuit of international trends.

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BUILDINGS INSTEAD OF DISCOURSE
Empathy and Modern Architecture in West Africa

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Abstract

The latter half of the twentieth century witnessed a silent and unabated trend among architects in Africa to create architecture that reflected their modern identities and changing political situations. Modern nations states emerged, unhooked from European colonial masters. Architects reacted to the new post-colonial situations of these new nations by creating buildings that embodied their feelings about who modern Africans were and what they could own. In other words, these designers erected structures that they wanted to empathize with. Nonetheless such efforts were not coordinated on a continental scale and hence occurred in fits and starts, owing partly to the hegemonic power of the International Style to be applied to municipal and educational buildings on the continent. That was to change with ArchiAfrika, an African not-for-profit organization that organizes conferences to discuss the future of architecture in Africa. It decided to convene another meeting in 2014 in Lagos, Nigeria. The occasion was to mark the first time that architects such as Sir David Adjaye, Kunle Adeyemi, Francis Kere and the founder of ArchiAfrika, a Ghanaian named Joseph Addo, would participate in a panel discussion about what forms the built environment should take in the twenty-first century.
All four architects have continued to create architecture on the continent that has explored the place of empathy, identity, architectural form and critical regionalism on the continent. A forerunner was the Nigerian artist turned architect, Demas Nwoko who has largely remained unknown in other parts of Africa, not to mention the Western world. This paper will explore how some of their buildings (including Nwoko) have contributed to a discourse that has not taken place in a conference setting. In other words, the presentation will investigate how their commissions have replaced words some deemed necessary for future debates about modern architecture in Africa.

Keywords: Empathy, Identities, Performative, Locale, Aesthetic

Buildings Instead of Discourse: Empathy, Modern Architecture in West Africa

The dawn of the twentieth-first century has seen the rise of architects of African descent, who increasingly have contributed to a global discourse on contemporary architecture. While the more popular ones among this group, namely Francis Kere, Sir David Adjaye and Kunle Adeyemi have received a lot of attention in the West – winning prestigious awards and so on – local architects based in different African countries also come to mind. One in particular is Demas Nwoko, a Nigerian octogenarian and self-taught architect whose undergraduate education was in Sculpture.

Figure 1: Demas Nwoko (Top Left), Francis Kere (Top Right), Sir David Adjaye (Bottom Right), Joe Addo (Bottom Left) and Kunle Adeyemi (Middle Left)

This paper will examine how these architects' projects within Africa in this era sought to wrestle with contemporary African identities within the increasingly global twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This presentation does not purport to be an exhaustive treatment of the many local responses and engagement with modern and contemporary architects in the West. Additionally, the selection of architectural commissions may seem at first glance haphazard. Nevertheless, the justification for examining the works of Kere, Adjaye, Addo, Adeyemi and Nwoko lies in their dogged pursuit of a local architectural aesthetic within their various locales. In other words, it is the determination of this paper that they sought to create a sense of empathy with their architectural forms that revealed as much as about what the contemporary Nigerian, the contemporary Ghanaian, even the Burkinabe should look like and possess – as what forms contemporary architecture should adopt in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This presentation purports to be the beginning of a larger study that will incorporate more case- studies of other architects in Africa that will truly reflect an ambitious continental study.

One more thing needs to be said in favor for why these five architects and their commissions. All but one of them were to participate in a conference in order to discuss the future of the built environment. ArchiAfrika, an African not-for-profit organization that organizes conferences to discuss the future of architecture in Africa decided to convene such a meeting in 2014 in Lagos, Nigeria. The occasion was to mark the first time that Adjaye, Adeyemi, Kere and the founder of ArchiAfrika, a Ghanaian named Addo, would participate in a panel discussion about what forms the built environment should take in the twenty-first century. A curious footnote is the fact that Demas Nwoko was not invited. It raises the possibility that his exclusion may be due to his lack of "training" as a professional architect or even the lack of publicity of his residential and public buildings beyond the borders of present-day Nigeria.

Nwoko's omission from the Lagos Conference also highlights how different architects on the continent have not been able to network effectively, particular as it pertains to the quest of creating regional architecture. One would think that the

preponderance of voices in Nigerian and Ghanaian newspapers would have alerted the architects in both countries to the need to address the question of empathy in architecture. Nevertheless, it seems that the Nigerian Institute of Architects (NIA) and the Ghanaian Institute of Architects (GIA) seem oblivious to the mounting pressures of the public in both nations. In both countries, the conventional construction of buildings couched in a neo-Palladian style – not to mention a last gasp of the International Style – goes apace. The argument that the NIA continues to give for such construction is that the radical, albeit regional architectural alternatives that new architects propose are not safe and do not meet the rigorous standards of Nigerian Building Codes and Public Safeties. The remark is ironic to say the least because of the sadly frequent occurrence of the collapse of buildings that Nigerians have woken up to in the last twenty years.

The need for a forum to discuss how current architects, sadly with the clout on the world stage of an Adjaye, Kere and Adeyemi; was in part to respond to the resistance that professional bodies such as the NIA and GIA raised. Joseph Addo the convener, also had a broad vision for how he could equally transform the design disciplines in Africa. The Lagos Conference Additionally, multiple paper sessions exploring an intersection between design, Africa and the African Diaspora, was also supposed to take place alongside the aforementioned panel discussion. Addo's agenda, it seems, was to explore whether modern architectural forms could document or express existing social and cultural conditions on the continent – a nod to Kenneth Frampton's clarion call for a Critical Regionalism, decades earlier. One could even say that Addo wanted to initiate a conversation about empathy and architecture, seeing oneself in one form or fashion in new architectural forms on the continent.

The conference and the conversation between Adjaye, Adeyemi, Kere and Addo never took place. All four architects however have designed projects on the continent that have explored the place of empathy, identity, architectural form and critical regionalism in different locales on the continent. This paper will now turn to architects' buildings, in a way to even initiate that missed opportunity. In other

words, the presentation will investigate how their commissions have replaced words some deemed necessary for future debates about modern architecture in Africa.

Figure 2: Joe Addo's House in Ghana built between 2003 and 2004. Source: "Ghana Rising," an internet blog. (http://ghanarising.blogspot.com/2011/05/joe-osae-addos-home-in-accra-probably.html)

Out of five aforementioned architects, Addo's oeuvre currently seems to be the least visible to people outside of Ghana. He studied and practiced architecture in Los Angeles in the United States of America before he resettled in Ghana. His house, which he designed, reflects an embrace of some of the open plan principles advocated by Frank Lloyd Wright. Its placement on the site also reflects another key idea he may have obtained during his sojourn in America. A cursory look at such a structure's building materials and floor plans may leave one asking how Addo addressed the questions of identity and empathy that this paper seeks to argue for. To answer such a retort one should look no further than a postcolonial mindset that prevails in much of Francophone and Anglophone West Africa. (Ghana being England's first Colony in West Africa, definitely qualifies as an Anglophone

West African nation). That attitude is this: West Africans are sophisticated connoisseurs of both West and Nonwestern cultural habits and norms. A Ghanaian contemporary culture does not seek to return to some – they would say – primitive architectural past. On the contrary, these Ghanaians would see they seek to design contemporary architecture that beats the West at its own game. Hence one should "read" or analyze Addo's building in that light – as his perspective of what contemporary Ghanaian architecture should look like. One could also apply the mode of thinking outlined previously to other decisions that Ghanaians make on mode of dress, choice of music and so on. It is precisely here that Addo's choice of design for his home reflects a larger cultural dynamic in present day Ghana – namely a quest for some Ghanaians to come to terms with who they are in the twenty-first century.

Figure 3: Public Library designed by Francis Kere in Gando, Burkina Faso, under construxtion at the time. (The primary school complex was built after 2001). Source: Image from Kere Architecture.

Francis Kere on the other hand, approaches the same existential questions differently. If Addo's home reveals a tendency to be secularist and appeal to the Ghanaian intelligentsia as the latter grapple with identity, Kere's work in his home country of Burkina Faso also in West Africa embrace local traditions of building practices, community and materials. Before proceeding further however, one more thing needs to be said about Addo's secularist and intellectual tone inherent in his house. Unlike this residence, the Akan ethnic group have had a long lasting tradition of using Adinkra symbols to decorate their temples, residential structures as well as cloths that men wear around their torsos and over their shoulders. Addo's decision to discard that tradition is again symptomatic of his desire to be progressive. Kere on the other hand creates architecture of empathy that is quite the opposite. In the primary school complex for the village of Gando in Burkina Faso, Kere urged the female villagers to carry large earthen post to the construction site; male builders received them and sawed off the lids and used them as skylights for the ceiling of the public library. Additionally, the women rammed the earth for the floors of the school and library to the accompaniment of music. Kere has expressed in numerous lectures that he urged the women on and that he likened himself as a project manager to a musical conductor.

This activity and the entire building process for all of Kere's buildings in Burkina Faso taps deeply into traditions of communal activities that undergird farming, boy and girl initiations and ceremonies in Burkina Faso. Kere did not just contrive his building approach. Rather his building approach was a logical tangent into practices that were more fundamental to the socio-cultural fabric of contemporary Burkinabe society. These were other forms that Kere embraced and transformed. While they were not architectural forms per se, they had a relationship with his architectural solutions. On further contemplation however, one could even say that Kere's advocacy of those centuries-old practices into the construction of the Gando scheme were *extra* architectural.

Kere's approach to the questions of empathy and identity bring into our discussion how performative forms need to be incorporated in the discourse. Kere's strategy

seems to suggest a bottom-up one while Addo's is a top-down. Yet both describe the many dimensions that the conversation could have taken if all the aforementioned architects met at talked to one another at the Lagos Conference.

Kunle Adeyemi also adopted a humane approach to his design of the Makoko Floating School in the Makoko riverine community in Lagos, Nigeria that involved the fishermen in the community who are master divers. Given the amphibious nature of the structure, the fishermen's diving skills were indispensable in the realization of the project. Makoko is a community that has lived in the Lagos Lagoon for centuries.[1] Their ancestors came from present-day Benin Republic. Makoko's lumber and waterlogging industry is also unparalleled in Nigeria and remains a distinct feature of the place. (The Third Mainland Bridge lies above and next to Makoko, and smoke from the Makoko has engulfed generations of commuters on the bridge). That lumber was also the primary building material that Adeyemi used for his floating school.

Figure 4: Makoko Floating School in Lagos, Nigeria, designed by Kunle Adeyemi and erected in 2013. Source: NLE WORKS.

[1] The Lagos Lagoon is off the shore of Lagos in Southwest Nigeria.

In 2013, Adeyemi conceived the project as a solution to the need of the Makoko community for a school. While the project garnered accolades and awards from the around the world and led to subsequent iterations at the Venice and Brussels Biennales – the project has also been a topic of conversation for governments who are trying to solve housing around the world – here too one can lose sight of the ways in which this project like the aforementioned two contribute to the present discussion of empathy in the contemporary architecture in West Africa.

First, the Makoko Floating School highlights the robust social-cultural fabric of the riverine communities that dot West Africa and reveals in the incredible diversity of the peoples that populate the part of the continent. Adeyemi's design was a clarion call, a voice for people particularly in Lagos, who were at the mercy of the Lagos State Government. (For more than 30 years, the government has evicted large swaths of the community several times). One only needs to raise the government's response to the Makoko Floating School to begin with. The government declared the structure illegal and threatened to demolish it. Only when the building started to receive plaudits from around the world did the state government reconsider its position and entered into a dialogue with Adeyemi on how the structure could be replicated in Makoko.

Despite the subsequent collapse of the Makoko School due to the torrential downpour that is so symptomatic of the tropical climate of Lagos, Adeyemi had proven his point. More importantly he had alerted the world to the plight of the Makoko community and also revealed in another side, dimension to the quest for local architecture to self-identity with people of different economic levels in various West African societies.

Sir David Adjaye, Ghanaian architect, who was raised in Tanzania, also designed a building in Lagos, which opened in 2015. Known as the Alara Concept Store, the structure is a retail store in a part of Lagos that is known for its commercial outlets. This structure's front façade reveals motifs in wrought iron that Adjaye would also

use in his more famous National Museum of African American Culture in Washington D.C in the United States. While the triangular windows on the side facades hearken to Le Corbusier's Ronchamp Chapel, the prominence of the wrought iron in the front and side faces hearken to the world famous batik patterns and cloth in Southwest Nigeria. Adeyemi had used a similar motif to enshrine his structure in Washington D.C. to provide a connection between the African Diaspora that African Americans are a part of and the African continent. In the Alara Concept Store this strategy while different in configuration from the Museum in D.C. is in this particular case, a greater example of an architect creating architecture of empathy: ground in other words, a culture's visual memory. Adjaye's design, more than the aforementioned case-studies draws upon a visual palette that has been the lingua franca of a region for generations; even as Adjaye translate the forms from cloth on motifs to exterior cladding in buildings. Adjaye's exterior surface in the Alara Concept Store may have had even more resonance with the building's occupants than say in the Museum in Washington D.C. – where the question of the relationship between the African Diaspora and Africa is fraught with all sort of issues.

Figure 5: Alara Concept Store in Lagos, Nigeria designed by Sir David Adjaye. It opened in 2015. Source: Adjaye Associates.

Our final case study is a project that did not see the light of day. Demas Nwoko designed it, who we mentioned before. Nwoko in many ways is the patriarch of the architects considered in this presentation, and the only one who did not earn a degree in architecture. Nwoko was part of a famous group of students of art at the

Ahmadu Bello University's Art Department and were known as the Zaria Rebel Society. This coterie consisted of artists who would shape modern and contemporary art in Nigeria for decades, including such masters as Victor Okeke and Bruce Onobrakpeya. Before Nigeria obtained its independence from Britain in the 1960s, Nwoko and his colleagues sought to revise the art curriculum in tertiary institutions to encourage Nigerian contemporary art.

Even Nwoko's sculptural works reflected this tendency: such art married the minimalist aesthetic of sculptors like Henry Moore with sculptural traditions of the Igbo of Southeastern Nigeria.

Nwoko's architectural commission in question however, was a proposal to design the National Theatre in Lagos, Nigeria – an open competition that was to result in a building to be erected in 1975. His designs prioritized local uses of space in dramas in different parts of the country – Yorubaland, Igboland and even Hausa land. Nwoko's solution was radical, bold and one of the few entries that attempted to create a visual dialogue like Adeyemi's Alara Concept Store, with the past – an empathy with Nigerian peoples and cultures. The successful proposal was a structure that was built in the International Style that remains to this day. It was designed by a Bulgarian firm and is almost a replica of Bulgaria's Palace of Culture and Sports in Varna, Bulgaria.

Hence in this case we see an instance where the Nigerian federal government's dogged pursuit of progress obscured them for considering local design solutions and architects in favor of foreign ones. This last comment too, is an ever-present feature of a postcolonial mindset in West Africa, that wants to "catch up with the West" in all endeavors. The National Arts Theatre of Nigeria in Lagos, which is in the process of being converted into a retail complex indicates again how an architecture of if I may be permitted to use the term, "anti-empathy" was the result of a top-down approach where the powers that be wanted to determine what should be contemporary Nigerian architecture.

In conclusion, this paper has sought to show how different and important figures of architecture in West Africa have engaged with existential questions of identity and empathy in their buildings and designs. While the Lagos conference did not take place, my preliminary observations reveal the need to discuss such matters further within the broader conversation of nationalism and regionalism in Modern Architecture.

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINESE NATIONAL IDENTITY AND THE DESIGNS OF NATIONAL MUSEUMS DURING THE EARLY POST-WAR PERIOD IN TAIWAN

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Abstract

Exemplifying with two Taiwanese national museums built in the 1950s and 1960s, this paper demonstrates how nationalism played a central role in shaping the development of Modern architecture in post-war Taiwan. After WWII, the Nationalist Party (KMT) retroceded Taiwan from Japan but simultaneously retreat there. This led to their strong attempt to reconstruct a cultural, historical, and ethnic relationships between Taiwan and China. The KMT strived to erase any traces of Japanese colonial constructions and to redirect the island's social identity toward the Chinese Nationalist's traditions. Such rise of Chinese nationalism stimulated several architects to search for a national style. They traced the root of the style from the past and connected it to their modern designs with an attempt to create a sense of community and national identity visually.
With Taipei's Nanhai Academy and the National Palace Museum as case studies, this paper argues that 'museum' has come to be conceptualized, not merely as place of exhibition, but as political symbols which represent the official definition of the nation. 'Museum' was given a political function and loaded with powerful political icons: axial and ceremonial arrangement of spaces, iconographic programmes and spatial narratives, evolutionary chronological displaying, pseudo-Chinese classical architectural elements, and the sculptures/ portraits of political elites placed in squares and exhibition halls. This paper contends that the two exemplifying museums which carry political function actually visualize the imagination of the nation. By interpreting these museum architectures in a broader social and political context, and verifying with museology, the paper demonstrates that an investigation of the Chinese national style would be inevitable if a better understanding of the development of modern architecture in Post-war Taiwan is to be achieved.

Keywords: Nationalism, National Museum, Taipei's National Palace Museum, Chiang Kai-shek

In 2000, Benedict Anderson, the author of an influential book *Imagined Communities* which marked a turning point in nationalism studies, visited Taiwan and had a short discussion about the contemporary development of Taiwan's nationalism. Anderson argued that the National Palace Museum was the political legacy of the KMT's rule over Taiwan. In the post-war period, Chiang Kai-Shek took most of the Qing royal collections from Beijing's Forbidden City and

preserved them in Taipei's National Palace Museum. Chiang treated these collections as 'national treasures' to demonstrate that he was the real heir of orthodox Chinese culture and the nation. However, after a successful process of democratisation had taken place in the post-martial law era of Taiwan, the KMT attempted to get rid of Chiang's legacy and its close connection with Chinese nationalism. To achieve this, Anderson suggested that returning all royal collections back to mainland China should be considered.

Anderson's suggestion has shown that museums, especially national museums, are not a neutral phenomenon. The material in museums is more than just collections. Museums imply a general process of political inheritance at work. It is a profoundly political concept of a nation that shapes museums and makes them possible. Anderson called it a form of political museumising (Anderson, 1991). Taipei's Nanhai Academy and the National Palace Museum are the best examples to demonstrate this close relationship between nationalism and museums.

It is generally agreed that recent studies in new museology, or critical museum theory, have introduced a broader sense of social and historical perspectives to museum studies, improving the way we view and understand them. These theories provide sharp analytical tools to challenge the old orthodoxy of museum studies and to shake up the way in which we view museums. While the tenets of new museology are argued by a disparate group of researchers, common threads can be found in their work (Vergo, 1989).

The first is a call to understand that 'objects' displayed in museums have been isolated from their original context. Objects are inserted into museums, new environments providing total protection against the decay of natural forces. Objects cease to perform their original function in daily usage and start to circulate in the world as private properties. Time is completely frozen in museums in order to preserve the objects on a long term basis or even in perpetuity for the purpose of collection, examination and exhibition. This change in use and ownership makes the objects become the collections of museums, conceived to be meaningful as the most important treasures of our society.

The second is recontextualisation. When objects have been put into museums, their life is different from their pre-collection existence. They enter a new stage and obtain a new status as authorised collection in museums. In addition, objects are labelled by their distinctive forms and levels of scarcity. In other words, the value of objects is not derived from their original context, but rather is given by curators and museum professionals who have the authority to judge the objects and place them in exhibition rooms. In other words, museums recontextualise objects and imply a set of power relationships which controls the way they are re-interpreted and exhibited.

The third concern is that only some particular objects are selected to be protected and displayed in museums. As Susan A. Crane has argued (2000,2-3), the purpose of museums is to fix the past of our cultures and societies through objects by selecting what deserves to be kept, remembered and saved out of time. As a result, museums create a vision of the past and future based on contemporary needs. They also formulate an organisational principle to collect, arrange and preserve the objects for reconstructing the past.

The fourth issue of the New Museology is ideology. For these new museum researchers, museums are not neutral spaces telling the 'real' stories of nature or human creations. As they have pointed out, objects in museums are not 'pure', 'authentic', or 'untouched since they had been found or had been made'. It is the effect of ideology which plays an important role in museums in framing the way in which we view the collections and experience the museum spaces. According to new museology, there are three types of ideology: evolutionary chronology, iconographic programme and nationalism.

(1) Evolutionary chronology: Enlightenment thinkers in the early modern era started building and organising exhibitions and collections in an enlightenment mode. It helped to create a new rational order of things. It also helped to naturalise and neutralise the way in which we view objects in museums. As a consequence, objects are classified in chronological order. Each of them represents a particular period of progressive development in form and style to

exemplify evolutionary changes in history. This makes the experience of walking through museums like passing through time.

(2) Iconographic programme: Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach suggest that museums should be seen as a kind of cultural shrine (Duncan and Wallach, 2006). The key function of these shrines is to impress visitors and make them believe that what they see in exhibitions are the most revered treasures of societies. The installations of exhibitions, layout of rooms and sequence of collections all create experiences that resemble traditional religious experiences. Like other ceremonial monuments, museums are complex architectural forms which organise visitors' spatial experiences as a script organises a performance. By following the script, visitors engage in a visual activity full of ritual meanings (Duncan and Wallach, 2006, p.53). Nothing will illustrate the contemporary iconographic programme better than the notion of object lessons in modern public museums. When works of art no longer serve as royal collections but are claimed as national treasures, they are used to show the wealth of nations to impress 'new visitors', usually citizens of the nation. These citizens are given a lesson in museums about the history of their nation and their own roots (Duncan and Wallach, 2006, p.58-9).

(3) Nationalism: like many other architectural types, museums provide a cultural underpinning for the development of the modern nation-state. After nationalism became mainstream ideology in the early modern age, museum objects were calculated as part of the wealth of the nation, and 'rediscovered' their unique national characteristics. New objects were chosen to be protected and displayed in museums, because they had distinctive features which could represent the nation. Objects were given a new identity, different from their previous existence, as cultural and political symbols of the nation. The nation-states even monopolise interpretation of the objects. As a result, objects in museums are nationalised and codified as part of the visible evidence of the historical narrative of the nation (Bennett, 1995).

Objects in the museums do not directly and automatically transmit meaning to visitors. The meaning of objects depends on the context of other objects, the

spatial design, the method of representation and the environment of museums. Museum architecture is of central importance to the visitor experience. One of the long-standing ways to envision museums is that museum architecture is a sacred space protecting national treasures from the outside world (Marstine, 2006). The architectural form of museums is expected to visualise the image of the cultural shrine that can give visitors a sense of privilege and an opportunity to catch a glimpse of the mysterious past.

However, many innovative ideas of establishing a modern national museum for the public were derived from the Louvre in Paris. The Louvre can be viewed as the prototype of national museums, which restored multiple art works and anthological and archaeological objects viewed as national treasures (Duncan and Wallach, 2006). The success of the Louvre attracted new nations to take it as a model for imitation. After the Qing emperor was forced to move out of the Forbidden City in 1924, several politicians and cultural elites took the Louvre as example to support the establishment of the National Palace Museum in the Forbidden City (Hamlish, 1995).

Soon after it was opened in 1925, the Second Sino-Japanese War took place. The Museum was forced to close due to the spread of the War in Northern China, with the national treasures retreating with the Nationalist government from North to Southwest of China. When the Chinese Communist party took control of China, the Nationalists retreated to Taiwan and carried most the important treasures with them. It took another forty years of waiting to witness Taipei's National Palace Museum opening in 1965. Before the Museum was rebuilt, all packaged collections were temporarily housed in Beigoukou, Taichung (Na, 2004). These objects were unpacked only for academic research on special request of related scholars. This small exhibition room attracted numerous sinologists, Chinese art historians and a great number of ordinary people.

Before Taipei's National Palace Museum was re-opened in 1965, the KMT used the previous Japanese colonial government's exhibition spaces to display mainstream Chinese art. The Nanhai Academy was among the first group of cultural and educational facilities constructed for the public by the KMT with a

definite political purpose in post-war Taiwan. The idea of the Academy was the foundation of a Chinese museum acropolis in Taipei to preserve Chinese cultural relics and rare book collections that retreated with the government from mainland China. The acropolis also served the function of promoting the orthodox culture of China. In 1953, after Chiang Kai-shek visited the Garden, he asked Chang Chi-yun, the minister of education, to build a series of pubic buildings which included the Central Library (1955), the National Taiwan Arts Education Centre (1956), the Confucius-Mencius Society of the Republic of China (1956), the National Taiwan Science Education Centre (1958), The National Museum of History (1956-64) and many other governmental institutes to promote cultural and educational affairs. These museums were given a political function to reconnect the link between Chinese nationalism and the Taiwanese inhabitants. They became a visible vehicle for conveying a message that the cultural and political legitimacy of the nation had been firmly tied to the regime.

Although Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT lost the Chinese Civil War, they achieved partial victory in the cultural struggle. Taipei's National Palace Museum was a prime example to illustrate that it was Chiang's regime, not Mao Ze-dong's, that protected the core of Chinese national culture for China. In 1960 Chiang decided to build a grand museum to display Qing imperial collections after their long journey from the mainland that took seventeen years (1933-49). There are three points which should be highlighted in the explanation of the making of the museum:

(1) Sun Yat-senism and the legitimacy of the nation: as mentioned earlier, Sun Yat-senism was a sort of political ideology developed in the late 1920s. This ideology was promoted by Sun's followers who viewed him as a founding father of the Republic and the true heir of orthodox Confucianism. Chiang Kai-shek was one of the leading advocates of Sun Yat-senism. It was no surprise that in 1965, Chiang chose Sun's centennial birthday as the day for the re-opening of Taipei's National Palace Museum. It conveyed a clear message that the Museum was built to honour Sun who left a rich cultural and political legacy to the nation. On the day of the re-opening, Chiang visited the Museum and made a famous speech to re-affirm that Sun was the true successor who had inherited the long-

established Confucian tradition from previous cultural sages and national heroes. Chiang also denominated the Museum as the Chungshan Museum in remembrance of Sun (Chiang, 1977, p.89). For Chiang, rebuilding the Museum in Taipei was one of the ideal ways to realise Sun's cultural and political thought.

(2) Anti-Communist ideology and the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement: the establishment of the National Palace Museum symbolised the regime's determination to guard the valuable treasures of the nation. During the Cold War period, Communist China closed itself off from the world. Researchers who were interested in Chinese culture and history had to come to Taiwan for their primary sources. Taipei's National Palace Museum was the only place that preserved the largest number of Chinese art and imperial documents outside mainland China. As a result, the Museum became one of the must-see attractions for foreign scholars and tourists who visited Taiwan for academic or diplomatic purposes. The Nationalist government to promote an image that it was Taiwan and not the mainland that was the true stronghold of Chinese culture.

In 1966, the Chinese Communist Party launched the Cultural Revolution under the leadership of Mao. Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT viewed the Revolution as a threat to Chinese traditional culture. Chiang immediately launched the Chinese Culture Renaissance Movement to fight against the Revolution. The goal of the Movement was to revive Chinese traditional culture through the leadership of Chiang's cultural policies. The Movement attempted to strengthen the role of the National Palace Museum, instituting a political ideological mission, glorifying nationalist spirit and patriotic sentiments (Du, 2003).

(3) Nationalism and the object lesson: Like other museums around the world, Taipei's National Palace Museum also had a function in education. The Museum's rich collections of Chinese culture could help the Taiwanese to understand the history of their motherland By this process it was argued that the Taiwanese would come to recognise that they were inseparable members of the Chinese nation (Du, 2003). Thus, Taipei's National Palace Museum played an important role in providing these object lessons to the Taiwanese, achieving the governmental aim of decolonisation and re-signification in the post-war era.

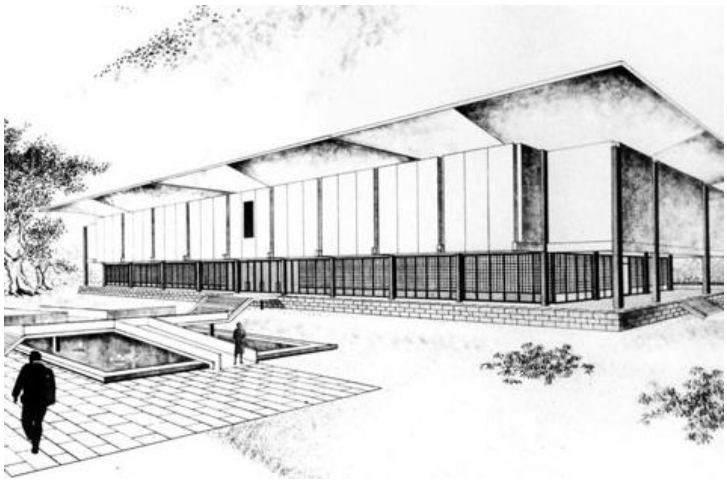

Figure 1. Wang Da-hong's design of the National Palace Museum.

When Chiang Kai-shek decided to build a grand museum to house the royal collects in Taipei, a closed architectural design competition for the Museum was held by the museum committee in 1961. Wang is a famous architect who gained a great reputation for his creative designs in transforming Chinese traditional architectural form into a modernist language. A graduate of Cambridge and Harvard University, Wang was heavily influenced by a modernist architectural education. He also disapproved of Taiwanese architects who directly copied the model of Western modernist architecture in their work (Li, 1979). He was looking for an alternative direction of architectural expression based on pure modernist architectural principles without losing a traditional Chinese character. The design of the Museum was one of Wang's early attempts.

In this design, the main body of the Museum is a modernist rectangular box topped with three reverse umbrella-shaped roofs. The curve indicates the outline of Chinese traditional building roofs, but was made in a pure modernist form and with new concrete technology. This design showed that Wang attempted to combine the creative structure system and simple modernist form with Chinese classical architectural motifs to express a new image of modern Chinese architecture.

Although Wang won the competition, his design did not actually carry out. The main reason was that Chiang Kai-shek was very dissatisfied with the result. He thought that the design did not fulfil his vision of the Museum which planned to display the most important national treasures of China. Therefore, the museum committee finally decided to transfer the project to another architect: Huang Bao-yu (1918-2000). Huang presented a grand museum cladded with palace-like roofs and Chinese classical building decorations. His design directly conformed to the museum committee's imagination of an impressive museum for housing the most important national treasures of the nation.

Figure 2. Huang Bao-yu's Design of the National Palace Museum.

As Tamara Hamlish has argued, what the state preserves in the museum is not the collections themselves but their symbolic significance as a sign of political authority and legitimacy (Hamlish, 2000, p.158). The design of Taipei's National Palace Museum shows the intention for museums to be some of the most significant cultural and political representations expressing the might of nationhood, by creating an image of a splendid national cultural shrine. In Huang Bao-yu's design, there are three important points that should be considered.

(1) The axis, monumentality and impregnability: Taipei's National Palace Museum is located in a scenic area of Waishuagxi, a suburb of Taipei near to the Yangming Mountain and Shilin. Many foreign embassies are located in that area. The Mountain and the nearby Tianmu are also the popular residential districts for foreigners. In addition, many other Chinese political and cultural elites lived near Waishuangxi. Chiang Kai-shek also had a residence close to Shilin. When the Museum was reopened, Chiang visited the Museum more often than before (Suo, 1986). The advantage of the location marked the site as the best place for the Museum to promote the Nationalist government's political and cultural ideology to foreign and domestic tourists (Ju, 2007).

Figure 3. The Museum's storage space inside the mountain.

Huang Boa-yu's design placed a long axis to welcome visitors from the gateway arch through the Museum main building to the mountain behind the Museum. Like most Chinese imperial palaces, the axis started from the gateway arch highlighting the monumentality of the Museum. The axis was an elaborate design of the iconography programme used to impress visitors with a sense of imperial China. The gateway arch also symbolised the beginning of the journey taking visitors through a time tunnel from the present day to the ancient past. Here, they prepared themselves to leave the secular world behind, to face the

sacred shrine in front of them. Following the axis, architects placed a long and vast square, magnificent outdoor staircase. The grand museum main hall and its storage tunnel lay hidden in the mountain as a sequence of spatial experiences.

The end of the axis was a mountain, an ideal place to preserve national treasures. The architects dug a huge tunnel inside the mountain as storage space for the collections. The tunnel was well-built for its purpose, meeting the highest standards of safety, preserving the treasures from theft, looting, or destruction by natural disasters and war. Hidden in the mountain, this tunnel created an image of impregnability to express the determination that the government would do whatever it took to protect the treasure from the outside world.

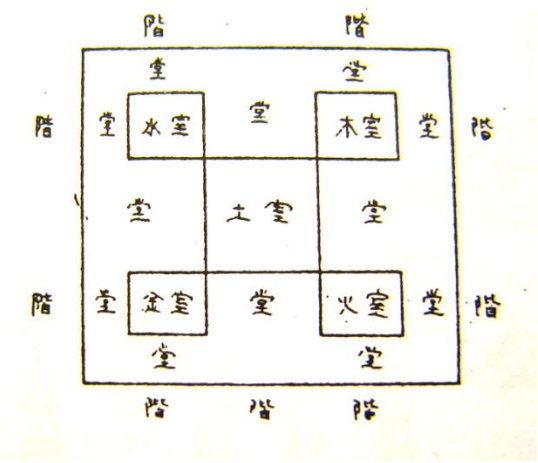

Figure 4. The Illustration of the Shihshih

The climax of the axis was the Museum's top floor, a mingtang space, also known as the prototype of Chinese imperial building in the ancient era. This space dominated the axis visually from the beginning to the main entrance of the Museum, indicating that the Museum had a strong spatial link to its imperial past.

(2) The traditional mingtang space: in Huang's design, the arrangement of the exhibition halls was composed of four square rooms surrounding a tall central lobby in the middle. This sort of design referred to the traditional mingtang

space. The space was the place that represented the ideal model of the highest level of political space in ancient China. The space was also viewed as the origin of China's imperial buildings. Originally, it was an open, empty square hall, built on a raised ground floor surrounded by four other rooms in four directions without intervention by walls or windows. Like the Greek Agora or Roman Forum, the space was used for people to share their ideas of politics and public affairs in ancient Chinese society (Lu, 1988).

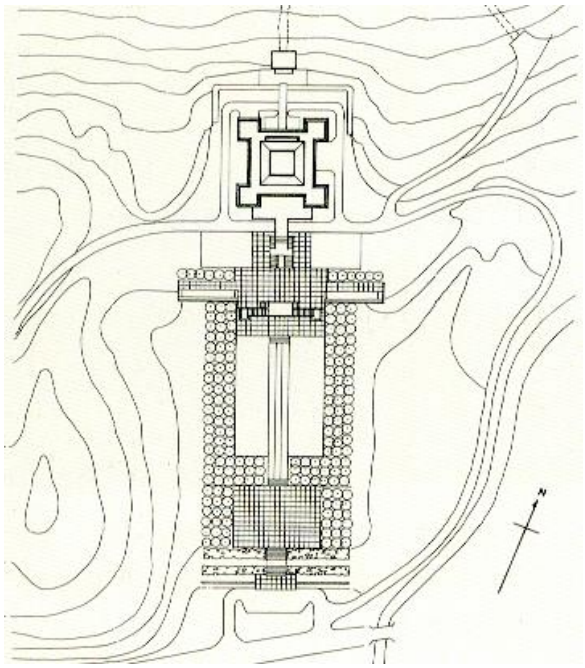

Figure 5. The Site Plan of the National Palace Museum.

Huang's design attempted to reconstruct a mingtang space in the Museum. In the layout, a tall central lobby was surrounded by four square exhibition rooms in four directions. This layout clearly referred to the original idea of the mingtang space. On the top floor above the lobby to welcome every visitor, Huang also rebuilt a mingtang shaped hall surrounded by a winding corridor. This hall was called the Sanxi Hall, named after Emperor Qianlong's favorite study room in Beijing's Forbidden City. The Hall was the apogee of the axis that led every tourist to the Museum from the outside. Inside, no matter which routes or

exhibition rooms that tourists chose to visit first, they would all finally be guided to the same hall, the Sanxi Hall on the top floor. Therefore, the Sanxi Hall was the centre of the iconographic programme which dominated visitors' visual and spatial experiences from the outside and the inside. The shape of the Hall indicated that the Museum's architectural style had a strong link with the Chinese imperial building tradition.

In the exhibition spaces of the Museum, all the collections were grouped by their types; bronze ornaments, paintings, calligraphy and porcelains, all displayed in separate rooms. The objects of each group were arranged in chronological order from the ancient era to the Qing dynasty. This order implied an evolutionary view of history displaying the national past in a modern form of classification. The old Emperors' collections now were treated as an 'art' preserved by cutting edge technology in a modern museum. Ju Jane C. calls this new way of exhibition and conservation the formation of 'canons of Chinese art' (Ju, 2004, p.489). In other words, the process of recontextualisation now gives the collections a new life. They no longer are the property of the royal family, but state-owned art work exhibited in the national museum for the public.

(3) Political symbols: apart from the axis, architectural style, layouts and ways of exhibiting, there are many other political symbols attached to the Museum. First of all, Sun Yat-san's favorite maxim and original calligraphy 'All under Heaven belongs to the People' was inscribed on the gateway arch. Sun quotes this phrase in his book *The Three Principles of the People*,asserting that this phrase fully represents the ideal model of Confucian political thought that should be introduced to modern society in order to reconstruct China's contemporary political order (Wang, 1981). In addition, the full text of the *Words of the Great Unity* was inscribed on the wall next to the side entrance, and these inscriptions were to keep reminding visitors of Sun's political legacy and its relationship to the Museum.

Statues and portraits of Chinese political figures are also displayed in the Museum. The most famous statue among them is Sun Yat-sen's statue standing in the middle of the central lobby. Chiang Kai-shek's portraits also hung in the

central lobby next to the statue and near the front gate (Du, 2002). These statues and portraits made certain that the Museum reflected an element of political atmosphere.

In fact, the political influences upon the Museum were more than what could be seen from the outside. As mentioned earlier, Chiang Kai-shek held the authority to overturn the final result of the Museum's architectural competition, and he also expressed his opinions to architect Huang Boa-yu's about the design of the Museum several times. According to Huang, Chiang was very satisfied with the design, which coincided with his vision of modern Chinese architecture. After that, Chiang invited him to design more buildings for the government and the party. Chiang visited the Museum frequently after it was opened to the public. He gave opinions to the curator on improving the service, including the condition of exhibition rooms, English guides, the reception of foreign guests and uniforms (Chiang, 1988). In addition, Chiang appointed his people to work for the Museum (Lin, 2000). From this it is clear that the construction of the Museum was very important to Chiang.

To conclude, Taipei's National Palace Museum is one of the greatest museums preserving the most important treasures of Chinese art, rare books and royal documents. In the early years, China's national museums were simply considered to be one of many representations of the national past. Not until Beijing's National Palace Museum opened to the public, did the Museum begin to take on a more essential symbolic role in defining national identity. After a long retreat to Taiwan during the wars, Chiang Kai-shek and the government recognised that the Museum and its collections were a very useful tool for political propaganda. Reconstructing a grand museum with a splendid Chinese classical architectural style in Taipei was one of the most important political missions in the post-war period to demonstrate that only Free China had the ability to rebuild and revive Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, Taipei's National Palace Museum is not a neutral space preserving national treasures as objective truths of the past, but a cultural shrine creating a vision of the past based on certain political needs.

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THE ROOTS OF BRAZILIAN MODERN ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract

In 1927, architect Gregory Warchavchik built the first modernist house in the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo. The synthesis of local and international, laid down in the works of Warchavchik at the turn of the 20's and 30's, developed into a national version of modernist architecture. The article analyzes the architect's approach in combining worldwide modernist features and national elements, which appears to be in tune with the ideas of Oswald de Andrade laid out in his Cannibal Manifesto, laying a foundation for the development of brazilianness in architecture.

Kewords: Warchavchik, modern architecture, Cannibal Manifesto, Brazilian modernism

Brazilian Modernist architecture has a number of specific features making it an interesting case study of the distinctive nationalism in the context of the international movement. This unique set of characteristics was coming together in parallel with the active formation of a national identity in general. For Brazilian culture the second decade of the 20th century was a time when new foundations were being laid for both the state and society. In 1922, sporadic attempts to import and adapt European trends on Brazilian soil resulted in statement-events such as the Semana de Arte Moderna (Modern Art Week) in São Paulo. The main goal of this event was to provide visibility to the emerging modernist movement and raise the issue of Brazilian national identity in a global context. The participating writers, artists and musicians were, to some extent, already practicing innovative approaches in their work. But the Modernist environment of Brazil was not homogeneous, even despite a lack of representatives. As Aracy Amaral writes, '*In Brazil, internationalism and nationalism were at the same time the basic characteristics of the modernist movement ...*' (Amaral, 1998, p. 21). Nationalism itself also included a multitude of

different manifestations, driven by the desire to – on the one hand get rid of outdated foreign academicism, and on the other, separate from Europe in cultural terms, declaring a uniqueness and cultural self-sufficiency.

At The Semana de Arte Moderna in 1922 the two representative architects were Antonio Garcia Moya and Georg Przyrembel, whose works perfectly illustrate the stylistic "isolation" of Brazil's architectural scene of the time from international trends. The desire to move away from academicism in the direction of national identity, but without reference to current theoretical developments, paradoxically led architects to eclecticism, a kaleidoscopic combination of decorative elements of the colonial past or the aestheticism of indigenous art. Moya presented projects created under the influence of pre-Columbian[1] architecture, with Marajoara style[2] facade elements. Przyrembel, who was in high demand as a practicing architect even before participating in the art week, presented projects that focused on his main field of interest – the Neo-colonial style, which was quite popular at that time.

Although the projects by both architects (Moya's poetry and Przyrembel's thorough study of colonial heritage) stood out in terms of their superb quality and design within the industry segment, they were not representing any new ideas in comparison to European avant-garde architecture. Thus, their participation in a revolutionary cultural event, points to the inertness of the architectural elite, especially in comparison to other creative fields such as literature and the visual arts which demonstrated infrequent but dynamic manifestations of the avant-garde.

Everything changed radically in 1925, when two architects simultaneously published articles about modern architecture in the Brazilian press. The first was Gregory Warchavchik with the article 'Acerca da arquitetura

[1] The indigenous people populating the territory of modern Brazil before Portuguese colonization, did not have a stone architecture, in contrast to the indigenous cultures of the Spanish territories in Latin America. Pre-Hispanic architecture usually represented in Mexico, and sometimes Latin America in general, could not be used as a national Brazilian feature.

[2] Marajoara is a pre-Columbian culture that existed on the island of Marajo, situated at the mouth of the Amazon River in Brazil. The Marajoara style was popular in the early 20th century, it embraces works of art made in the style or influenced by the ceramic ornamentation from Marajo island.

moderna' (About Modern Architecture), published in June 1925 in the popular newspaper of Italian immigrants 'Il Piccolo', in the 'Futurismo?' section. Shortly after, in November that year, Rino Levi's article 'A arquitetura e a estética das cidades' (Architecture and the Aesthetics of the City) and the translation from Italian of Warchavchik's earlier article came out in the 'Correio dá manha' newspaper. The text is somewhat concordant with Le Corbusier's ideas, especially in comparing a house with a machine.

> To build a house as cheap and comfortable as possible, this is what should worry the builder architect of our times of small capitalism, when the question of economy prevails over all else. The beauty of the facade has to result from the functionality of the plane of the interior layout, as the shape of the machine is determined by the mechanism that is its soul. (Warchavchik, 1925, translated by the author)

Gregory Warchavchik was born in Odessa, then a part of the Russian Empire, where he began studying architecture, and then continued his education in Rome. In 1923 a Brazilian construction company invited him to work as an architect and engineer. He arrived in Rio de Janeiro less than a year after The Semana de Arte Moderna. Two years later, in 1925, he published an article that resonated strongly with the Brazilian avant-garde elite. And two years later, in 1927, he completed the construction of a house considered the first modernist building in Brazil. J. de Lira in his detailed article about Warchavchik's professional trajectory assumes that it is while working under Roberto Cochrane Simonsen, who was fascinated by Taylorism in the face of the expanding architectural and engineering market, that Warchavchik was infected with the ideas of modernism (Lira, 2007, p. 156-157). It is highly possible that during his stay in Rome, Warchavchik had already formed his views on contemporary architectural problems under the influence of his teacher in the Escola Superior de Arquitetura de Roma, and later his employer, Marcello Piacentini. Just a few years later, in 1925, Rino Levi also became one of Piacentini's students. Although Levi's article "Architecture and the

Aesthetics of the City" had a completely different, less defiant tone, and raised the problem of the aesthetics of urban development, it expressed the same understanding of the inevitable transformation of the art of architecture under the pressure of industrialization.

> It is necessary for the artist to create something new and to achieve a greater fusion between what is structure and what is decoration; to achieve this the artist must also be a technician (Levi, 1925, translated by the author)

The simultaneity and similarity of these manifestations of the thirst for change in the art of architecture is natural in the context of worldwide changes. Considering the transitional state of the Brazilian avant-garde, it can be assumed that Rino Levi's publication could prompt Warchavchik to materialize his theory without further hesitation.

In 1927 Warchavchik, quit his position, registered his own company and began to build a house for his family. The land intended for construction belonged to the family of the architect's wife, Mina Klabin, who not only supported her husband in this experiment, but also participated by developing and implementing the landscape design.

The construction was an experiment, the result of which could be partly predicted, but not guaranteed. Difficulties could arise even at the project approval stage. As already mentioned, not only was the architectural education in Brazil strictly academic, but architectural practice was also conservative, allowing only for a slight fluctuation of style; deviating within historicism from cosmopolitan eclecticism only to neocolonialism. The project for the house on Santa Cruz street was designed in a neo-colonial style for submission to approval by the authorities. Dispensing with the facade decoration during construction, the architect achieved a clean shape inherent to modernism architecture. Today, knowing the final form of the constructed building, it is easy to spot how the project facade design wisely camouflaged the lapidary volume of structure with panels and figured tops of the porch walls. That is, even designing without a

third-party commission, it was impossible to expect a building permit, having submitted the project as is.

The resulting house had a square foundation on a plane, its strict geometry interrupted only by verandas on the rear and one of the side facades. Predominantly traditional techniques (i.e. without reinforced concrete) were used in construction. Brick walls were plastered over to give an impression of solidity. The walls had a bearing function, so obviously the Le Corbusier principles of modern architecture could not have been implemented: the edifice had no pilotis, ribbon horizontal windows or free layouts. The frame of the corner windows that are quite technologically sophisticated, make the monolith structure of the façade slightly lighter, but not as fine and airy as a reinforced concrete structure could provide. The labyrinth of rooms on the first floor is for the most part repeated on the second. The inner space planning of the house is a relevant issue, as it contradicts Warchavchik's statement that '*The beauty of the facade has to result from the functionality of the plane of the interior layout'* (Warchavchik, 1925) The inner space was organized in a traditional Brazilian manner according to centuries-old living habits, governed by division into private, social and service zones.

The significant differences between the building's implementation and the architect's ideas as expressed in his article were heavily criticized at the time. This discrepancy continues to be discussed by art historians today, but just as a historical detail and not a lack of consistency on the part of their creator. Much discussion at the time focused on the fact that the building was not economical – a condition stipulated by the architect in his text. In the absence of prefabricated parts, many elements of the construction and decorative finishing were custom made, contradicting the concept of prefabricated modular houses. All the interior decoration, from furniture to door handles, was made according to the overall design concept, much of the décor was handmade. On the one hand it had the appearance of an integral all-in-one interior, on the other – its unique manufacturing and high cost pushed the interior's execution away from modernist propaedeutics.

The multi-sloped traditional roof covered with ceramic tiles attracted most criticism. The facade walls were raised almost up to the level of the ridge, concealing it from view and thus creating the impression of a flat roof. The functional flat roof being one of the main features of modernist architecture, was made possible due to new insulating material and reinforced concrete. Warchavchik justified his traditionally constructed roof by the inaccessibility of these materials, although this was not quite so (Segava, 2012, p.35). It is highly possible that the decision was made due to climatic conditions, as well as the high costs of such solutions. It is also important to consider the limited access to highly qualified workers in São Paulo at that time.

In summary, the First Modernist House was far from the ideology proclaimed by the author in his text, labelled by some as *the First Manifesto of Brazilian Modernist Architecture*. The architect pulled together all his forces and ideas to create an impression that modernist architecture emerged. Nevertheless, we must admit the key role of this building in shaping Brazilianness in architecture. Here began his search for inspiration in his country's past, and the national architecture developed according to the scenario we know today.

In this context we can distinguish what, in our view, were the two most important aspects of Gregory Warchavchik's experiment: the creation of a precedent and the primary filtration of the elements determining style.

It seems that most of the compromises that the architect had to make, while building the house on Santa Cruz Street, were prompted by his desire to implement the project as quickly as possible. Despite the architectural elite being absolutely unprepared to accept the new architecture and the relatively undeveloped construction industry being unable to meet the technological needs of such a building; it became possible to implement at least a visual embodiment of modernism if not its constructive example. Comparing Warchavchik's house with the house of G. Rietveld built in 1924 in Utrecht, which followed a similar trajectory from traditional project for approval to modernist execution, can help to demonstrate more clearly the specificity of the Brazilian example. While

Rietveld's project also had a two-sloped roof, which was substituted by a flat one, Warchavchik choose to conceal it not even entirely. Rietveld left the inner space division of the first floor as it was in the plan, using the second floor, considered a garret and thus free of restrictions, for creating a space free of walls. Whereas Warchavchik, as mentioned earlier, implemented no innovative space organization solutions, marking a drastic contrast with the clean form of the façade This approach of amalgamation (and not substituting) became the basis for the development of an inclusive Brazilian visuality. If we consider the main characteristic of modernism in architecture to be that the external appearance is dictated by the functionality of planning and stems from the organization of internal space, then the house of Warshavchik can only be called a visual embodiment of modernism. But if we consider modernism to be a search for new visual incarnations of a changing reality, then the example in question certainly meets the criteria; since Brazilian culture was at the time in search of a formula for combining its past traditions with the changes dictated by global progress.

The effect achieved by the emergence of the First Modernist house could be compared to the destruction of a dam. Over the next few years, three more houses were built by Warchavchik but already on commission.

One more important point that can be classified as a primary filter, was the atypical combination of architectural and stylistic elements. In response to criticism, Warchavchik wrote in 1928:

> Not wanting to copy what is being done in Europe, inspired by the charm of Brazilian landscapes, I tried to create an architectural character that would be adapted to this region, the climate and also the ancient traditions of this land. Along with straight, sharp, vertical and horizontal lines, which constitute, in the form of cubes and planes, the main element of modern architecture, I made use of the very decorative and characteristic colonial tiles, and I believe I was able to design a very Brazilian house, perfectly adapted to the environment. The garden, of tropical character, around the

> house, contains all the wealth of the typical Brazilian plants. (Warchavchik, G. cit. by Ferraz, p. 27, translated by the author)

The traditional tiled roof placed in the context of a modernist construction, be it accidentally or intentionally, and the garden designed by Mina Klabin, became an architectural illustration of the most important manifesto of Brazilian culture of the first half of the 20th century – the Manifesto Antropófago (Cannibal Manifesto). Cacti used here for the first time, before Juan O'Gorman did the same in the house of Frida Kahlo and Diego Riviera (Carranza, 2014, p. 37), planted against the background of a flat white symmetrical facade in the style of Adolf Loos, created a new aesthetic, a new visual code where the national became equal to the international.

The Manifesto Antropófago, written by Oswald de Andrade in 1928, expressed the concept of a culture that creates itself, absorbing others, it's own past and other's future. Anthropophagy, as a cultural concept, was considered radical at the time of its creation, later art repeatedly turned to it reinterpreting it anew. Having built the First Modernist House in Brazil, architect Gregory Warchavchik, outlined not only a new look at Brazilianness as such, but also gave the impetus for a courageous approach to modernist interpretations of the national.

One of the vivid examples of the evolution of Warchavchik approach is the new building of the Ministry of Education and Public Health (Ministério sa Educação e Saúde Publica) in Rio de Janeiro, built by a Lucio Costa, a great admirer of Warchavchik's work. Minister Gustavo Capanema rejected the original competition winner's Marajoara-style project on the grounds of not meeting the city's needs for innovative national symbols, so Costa was assigned to create the design. The Ministry building became a symbol of developing Brazilian Modernism; a visual embodiment of the harmonized conjunction of general modernist elements contextualized through national features. Warchavchik laid the foundation for its inherent features: such as the transformation of climate-dictated design into aesthetic elements; unusually deep penetration of the environment into

construction; re-reading of traditional national architectural elements; and finally, the carnivalization of Brazilian visual culture in general.

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